

Robert Foster
South Portland
LD 1259

Dear Judiciary Committee Member,

I am writing to urge your support of LD 1259, An Act to Enhance Public Safety in Maine by Defining the Relationship Between Local and Federal Law Enforcement. I believe that deputizing local police to carry out federal immigration enforcement turns every routine encounter into a potential deportation risk. Despite rhetoric, the 287(g) program overwhelmingly impacts people with no criminal history through minor traffic offenses. A 2011 Migration Policy Institute report found that half of all detainers issued were for misdemeanors and traffic infractions.

I also believe that programs like 287(g) make everyone less safe. They create fear, not cooperation. We all want safety, but safety means being able to call the police when something's wrong, no matter who you are or how you look. When people don't trust police, they're less likely to report domestic violence, fraud, or unsafe working conditions—issues that affect everyone in a community, not just immigrants.

We cannot afford to strain local resources. 287 (g) agreements divert resources away from the investigation of serious crimes and other state and local police. Our police are already strained. The last thing they need is another responsibility in an area of law that is constantly changing.

Immigration enforcement doesn't just affect people without legal status. U.S. citizens and lawful residents have been mistakenly detained and even deported. These deportations don't just affect individuals—they tear apart families, disrupt workplaces, and ripple through communities.

As your constituent, and a Maine taxpayer, I do not want my tax dollars to be spent on these harmful law enforcement activities.

Again, I urge you to vote in support of LD 1959.

Thank you.

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