

Patricia O'Neil  
Wells  
LD 1971

Testimony in Regards to LD 1971: An Act to Protect Workers in This State by Clarifying the Relationship of State and Local Law Enforcement Agencies with Federal Immigration Authorities

As a resident of Wells, home to the only police department in the state of Maine to enter into an agreement with ICE, I am very glad to see this bill come before the judiciary committee and hope that you will be able to give some statewide clarity to this very divisive issue. I am strongly in support of this bill. The Department of Homeland Security and Immigration and Customs Enforcement have become rogue agencies in our federal government. The Secretary of HHS has made it clear that she has no intention of obeying an order from the Supreme Court to return Mr. Abreu-Garcia, now being wrongfully held outside of this country, despite the admission by ICE that his removal was the result of an "administrative error." They are refusing to obey the law.

There is no benefit to the State of Maine or to Mainers in general by allowing our local law enforcement agencies to be drawn into assisting the lawlessness of this rogue agency. We have all witnessed masked, unnamed, and unidentifiable operatives handcuffing individuals, hustling them into unmarked vehicles, and taking them to private prisons thousands of miles away from their families and their support systems. There is nothing to be gained by collaborating with such unAmerican disregard for the rule of law and everything to be gained for standing up for bedrock American values - equal justice under the law.

I urge you to give this bill your full consideration and to move it on for a vote by the full legislature. Thanks you for your time and for your service to our state.