

Claire Horne
Appleton
LD 1259

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Testimony in Support of LD 1259: An Act to Enhance Public Safety in Maine by Defining the Relationship Between Local and Federal Law Enforcement.

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn and honorable members of the Judiciary Committee. My name is Claire Horne and I am a resident of Appleton, Maine. I am writing to testify in favor of LD 1259: An Act to Enhance Public Safety in Maine by Defining the Relationship Between Local and Federal Law Enforcement.

LD 1259 would ensure that local law enforcement agencies cannot enter into agreements with federal law enforcement agencies. This is an essential protection in light of agreements like the 287(g) program that are harmful to communities and put the rights of everyday people at risk.

Driving is a nearly inescapable reality of rural life. For me it has always been just a necessary everyday task, but driving has been made dangerous and potentially life-altering for some due to the prevalence of abductions by federal law enforcement at routine traffic stops. I have heard of several traffic stops local to me that resulted in detainment. There are cases from around the country of immigrants being abducted and deported regardless of whether they are legal US citizens or pursuing immigration through the legal channels. Many of the practices of federal agencies like ICE are violating the constitutional rights of immigrants and denying their right to due process. If 287(g) programs are allowed in this state, local police officers may be compelled to act similarly and violate the constitutional rights of our neighbors. The ACLU of Maine has stated that 287(g) agreements incentivize racial profiling because law enforcement are allowed to detain anyone who they suspect could be a non-citizen. This is incredibly subjective. I fear for my friends and neighbors who are Black, Indigenous, and people of color who would be in increased danger of having their constitutional rights violated or experiencing violence at the hands of police. I don't feel safe living in a state where constitutional rights are not respected because that means my rights likely won't be respected either.

No one locally benefits from agreements like the 287(g) program. As we can see from examples around the country, 287(g) is expensive to implement. In Prince William County, Virginia, it cost \$6.4 million to implement its 287(g) program in its first year and \$26 million over five years. Property taxes were raised as a result and \$3.1 million was cut from their budget. Maine taxpayers should not be expected to pay for such an expensive program, particularly while other budget lines, like infrastructure and schools, are too often going underfunded already. As someone who has lived in rural Maine for most of my life, I can appreciate the importance of maintained roads, schools, and other important uses of municipal funding. When put in the context of life in Maine, 287(g) seems like a massive swindle to me. Mainers should not be paying for their neighbors to be profiled and over-policed. My life does not improve if an immigrant is detained by police while driving to work. My life does improve if we can all drive to work on safe roads. My life does improve if we have the funding to educate our youth. I would like to focus on funding what makes our lives better.

You have the chance to ensure that the rights of Mainers are respected and our communities are safer by voting in favor of LD 1259. Involvement in the 287(g) program would cause many immigrants in Maine to feel unsafe going to work or being involved in their communities, even if they are citizens or have never been convicted of a crime. Immigrants are important community members and contribute to the vibrancy of our towns. Please protect our towns and communities from the over-policing of people of color that wastes considerable taxpayer resources and impacts our work force while communities and families get torn apart. We quite

literally cannot afford to have these programs in our state.

Thank you for your time and for reading my testimony. I strongly urge you to vote Ought to Pass for LD 1259.

Sincerely,
Claire Horne
Appleton, ME