

Hilary Eslinger  
Woolwich  
LD 1259

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Woolwich, Maine  
May 6, 2025

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and Honorable Members of the Judiciary Committee.

Thank you for the opportunity to address the Committee and provide written testimony. My name is Hilary Eslinger and I am a resident of Woolwich. I am submitting testimony in support of LD 1259: An Act to Enhance Public Safety in Maine by Defining the Relationship Between Local and Federal Law Enforcement.

I ask that members of the Judicial Committee stand on the side of justice and support the constitutional rights that apply to every person on U.S. soil. It is clear that 287(g) agreements create increased fear within communities and create barriers for immigrants to access emergency services. It is essential that our health care facilities, schools, and emergency services remain spaces that can be accessed without fear. This federal government – and others before it – have violated constitutional rights to carry out their mass deportation agenda. We can expect catastrophic impacts on public health and safety if these spaces are no longer accessible to Mainers.

While the constitution's guarantees of due process and equal protection apply to everyone in the United States, regardless of immigration status, we are being flooded with examples of individuals who have disappeared into immigration detention centers or other international carceral systems. Maine resources are already strained and limited, with overtime spending on police increasing by almost 30% over the last 5 years. Maine's legal system is already working outside of capacity and with these partnerships comes increased liability for following orders that might be illegal. This is not the time to increase collaboration with federal systems that are working to decrease human rights and promote a fascist agenda.

My hope is that our elected leaders in Maine continue to move toward safety and liberation for all of your constituents. We need each other right now and we have the opportunity to expand our hearts and minds, stand against hate, and ensure that all Mainers have the right to basic needs and constitutional rights.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my perspective with the Committee. I urge you to vote in favor of LD 1259.

Thank you for your time,

Hilary Eslinger