

Loren McGrail
Belfast
LD 1971

Dear Representatives,

I am writing to you on behalf of my church, First Church in Belfast, and faith communities in the Greater Bay Ministerium to vote in favor of LV 1259 and LD 1971. In April a Venezuelan man from Waldo County was picked up and turned over to ICE and detained illegally. Members of my church and community rallied together to raise bail and get him released. He is now home awaiting trial. We are still providing food and now legal support to his family as his case is now in the courts.

As a consequence of his arrest and illegal detention, we, the members of GBAM, sent a letter to our sheriff to remind him that he is not required to work with ICE. Here is what we said:

Because you “are not required to do so,” we ask you, for the sake of compassion and justice, to lean into that choice as you consider whether or not to involve your department in any unnecessary and non-criminal detainments being requested.

We are watching families suffer and seeing children afraid. These are our community members, friends and neighbors. We ask that you not participate in the traumatic and unnecessary detainment and removal of non native residents of our community. We ask in the name of all that is holy and loving, do not participate in actions that bring pain, suffering, and separation into the lives of those simply trying to live in peace.

A few days later the Sheriff wrote a letter to members of Waldo County apologizing for what happened and assured us this would not happen again. I ask you to reflect on this story and vote your conscience and support LD1259 and LD1971.

In faith,
Rev. Loren McGrail