

**Mayor and Council Offices**

Mark Dion

Mayor

April 22, 2025



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Testimony of Mayor of the City of Portland, Mark Dion

*Before*

The Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety

*In Support of*

**LD 1259, An Act to Enhance Public Safety by Defining the Relationship Between Local and Federal Law Enforcement**

April 22, 2025

Senator Beebe-Center, Representative Hasenfus, and Honorable Members of the Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety, I write on behalf of the City of Portland in support of LD 1259, which defines [LP1] the relationship between local law enforcement agencies and federal immigration enforcement authorities.

As a city with a long and proud tradition of welcoming immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers, Portland has worked to build a public safety system grounded in community trust, transparency, and respect for civil rights. This trust is critical to the safety of all residents, regardless of immigration status, and is essential to the success of community policing, crime prevention, and public cooperation with law enforcement.

Under LD 1259, local law enforcement would not be permitted to engage in civil immigration enforcement unless otherwise compelled by federal law or court order. It clarifies the limits of local involvement in immigration matters and aligns with long-standing public safety practices adopted by Portland and other municipalities throughout the state.

By establishing clear boundaries, the bill ensures that municipal officers can remain focused on local public safety priorities, rather than being drawn into federal enforcement operations that fall outside the scope of their training, authority, or jurisdiction. It also protects municipalities from the liability and logistical burdens that often accompany informal cooperation with federal immigration authorities.

We believe this bill will help preserve public safety by promoting trust between immigrant communities and law enforcement, while also respecting the appropriate division of responsibilities between federal and local jurisdictions. At a time when many residents are already living in fear of family separation or deportation, LD 1259 offers a thoughtful and practical framework for protecting both safety and dignity.

For these reasons, the City of Portland respectfully urges the Committee to vote “ought to pass” on LD 1259.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mark Dion", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Mark Dion  
Mayor  
City of Portland, Maine