

May 19, 2025

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

Thank you for the opportunity to address the Committee. My name is Andrea Breau, I'm a resident of Lewiston, and I'm writing in my capacity as both a scholar of immigration in Maine and as a multigenerational Franco-American born in Lewiston who married into an immigrant family in Lewiston. I am in strong support of two bills before the committee today – specifically LD 1259 and LD 1971.

I love my community – both the largely white, working-class one I was raised in during the 1980's and 90's, and the beautiful, hardworking, racially diverse one it has become in the last 25 years. As my husband and I have begun raising our own mixed race, multifaith, multilingual, immigrant-descended family here in Lewiston ourselves, our roots have not only sunk deeper but have spread wider. It is an understatement to say that our lives have been enriched by the relationships we have made across our many differences from our neighbors and friends. My academic research with both multigenerational white youth and youth of color from recently immigrated families in Lewiston from 2015-16 only confirmed what I already knew via this lived experience – we need each other to survive, to thrive, and to grow.

I have been so deeply saddened to watch fear settle into every crevice of my community since January of this year. The widespread stories of ICE snatching people off the street and out of their places of work in Maine have been horrifying<sup>1</sup>. They have created the kind of mistrust and fear that stops people from going out into their community – not only to meet their basic needs, but to simply connect with others as they go about their day. This kind of informal, constant connection is what strengthens the fabric of a community. Fear has begun to unravel these

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<sup>1</sup> Joe Charpentier, *Two seriously injured in Eustis crash, 3 detained by US Border Patrol*, Sun Journal, Feb. 10, 2024, available at <https://www.sunjournal.com/2024/02/10/two-seriously-injured-in-eustis-crash-three-detained-by-border-patrol/>.

Christopher Burns, *Feds detain 17-year-old immigrant on his way to work in Maine*, BDN, March 19, 2025, available at <https://www.bangordailynews.com/2025/03/19/central-maine/central-maine-police-courts/lewiston-maine-t een-immigrant-detained-customs-border-protection-deportation-el-salvador-jose-adalberto-herrera/>.

Jim Leonard, *Traffic Stop Leads to Immigration Hold*, Midcoast Villager, March 21, 2025, available at [https://www.midcoastvillager.com/news/publicsafety/traffic-stop-leads-to-immigration-hold/article\\_f4b8c6b3-9eb1-4a47-88d6-21726012c02b.html](https://www.midcoastvillager.com/news/publicsafety/traffic-stop-leads-to-immigration-hold/article_f4b8c6b3-9eb1-4a47-88d6-21726012c02b.html).

Joe Charpentier, *Border patrol detains 16 migrants at Franklin, Somerset jails*, CentralMaine, March 21, 2025, available at <https://www.centralmaine.com/2025/03/21/border-patrol-detains-16-migrant-workers-at-franklin-somerset-jails/>.

Marie Weidmayer, *Border Patrol is 'unlawfully' detaining asylum seeker in Maine, petition says*, BDN, March 24, 2025, available at <https://www.bangordailynews.com/2025/03/24/state/state-police-courts/border-patrol-alleged-unlawful-detainment-maine-asylum-seeker/>.

threads in very real ways. This is a fear that tears us apart from one another, that silences, and that harms, and it is entirely unnecessary here. Fear – not immigration – is the unwanted presence in my community.

As you know, LD 1259 and LD 1971 would make it illegal for any Maine law enforcement agency or other organizations to carry out federal immigration enforcement actions on behalf of ICE. These bills would prevent local officials and organizations – who are already strained – from having to serve as ICE agents. Trust between law enforcement, immigrant-facing organizations, and immigrant communities is essential to prevent fear, keep our communities safe, and to protect the constitutional rights that everyone enjoys, regardless of citizenship.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my perspective with the Committee. I strongly urge you to vote “Ought to Pass” on both of these bills.

Dr. Andrea M. Breau, Ph.D.  
Lewiston, ME