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Yarmouth
LD 1259

Good afternoon, Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn and honorable members of the Judiciary Committee. My name is Andrea Lavoie, I live in Yarmouth, and I am writing to testify in favor of LD 1259 and LD 1971.

As a born and raised Mainer, the Maine that I know and love is made up of people from all walks of life. I grew up with neighbors, friends, and mentors who were immigrants. As a public school teacher in Portland, I worked closely with immigrant, asylum seekers, and refugee families. They are hard working people, eager to contribute to society and build a safe home, just like any Mainer. Statistics show the contributions Maine immigrants of all resident statuses have made to our state:

- There are 32,200 immigrant workers in Maine, making up 4.5 percent of Maine's labor force.

- Immigrant spending power in Maine is \$1.7B.

- Maine immigrants pay \$625.1M in taxes each year.

- Maine immigrants' contributions to Social Security are \$205.5M.

- Maine immigrants' contributions to Medicare are \$57.9M.

The positive impact immigrants have on our great state speaks to their hard work and good intentions. It should not be monetary value that proves the worth of a community, but it's undeniable that the immigrants who are here, regardless of their resident status, are contributing to the growth and development of our state, just like you and me.

But beyond dollar signs, Maine immigrants are human beings. They are moms and dads working tirelessly to provide for their families. Their children play and learn with your children in our community and schools. We're all living and working together in this state, yet we've allowed right-wing politics to dehumanize our view of our immigrant neighbors. People who are living in our community and aiding in the betterment of our state, not only deserve constitutional protections but are legally entitled to them, regardless of resident status. It is well documented that under the current administration, ICE is not honoring the constitutional rights of the people they are detaining. I do not want my law enforcement willingly aiding in this horrific and illegal mass deportation. Wanting a better life for your family is not a crime.

Capturing individuals without a proper warrant and detaining them without due process IS a crime. This is what federal agencies under the current administration are doing. As a taxpayer, voter, educator, and mom I do NOT want my local police supporting the work of ICE. By voting in favor of LD 1259 and LD 1971 you will help ensure that Maine law enforcement's time, money, and resources stay focused on what is most important: protecting the lives of all Mainers. Moreover, keeping Maine law enforcement out of contracts ICE and DHS will protect local agents from becoming involved in illegal arrests and raids, something that is morally and constitutional wrong. Please protect the lives of all Mainers by voting in favor LD 1259 and LD 1971.