



Good afternoon Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn and honorable members of the Judiciary Committee:

My name is Michelle Lamm, and I am the Executive Director of Greater Portland Family Promise, a nonprofit that partners with local communities to support families facing homelessness on their path to sustainable independence. We work at the intersection of housing, equity, and opportunity, providing transitional housing, case management, and homelessness prevention services to families in the Greater Portland area, many of whom are immigrants and asylum seekers.

I testify today in strong support of LD 1971.

This legislation is not only a matter of public policy, it is a matter of public trust, community well-being, and human dignity.

Every day, we walk alongside families who have lost their homes, their livelihoods, and in many cases, their sense of safety. These families are doing everything in their power to rebuild: seeking employment, enrolling their children in school, and contributing to the community they now call home. Yet they live in constant fear of the fact that law enforcement officers could put them at risk of detention or deportation, even when they've committed no crime.

LD 1971 draws a clear and necessary line between local law enforcement and federal civil immigration enforcement. It ensures that our police departments, correctional facilities, and state agencies do not become tools of a broken federal immigration system. It protects the ability of immigrant families to engage with local institutions.

This bill does uphold values of fairness, compassion, and due process by ensuring that no one is detained based solely on immigration status.

At Greater Portland Family Promise, we see the consequences of fear-based policy every day. Families arriving in Maine in search of safety are instead met with shelter waitlists, unaffordable rent, and federal immigration threats that destabilize their already fragile recovery.

LD 1971 helps ensure that Maine's law enforcement agencies remain focused on public safety and not on carrying out federal civil enforcement duties that erode trust in our institutions. It strengthens our communities by affirming that all people, regardless of status, deserve dignity, stability, and protection under the law.

At Greater Portland Family Promise, we believe every family deserves a home, a livelihood, and the opportunity to thrive. That vision depends on our willingness to reject fear-based policies and stand up for the humanity of all our neighbors.

I urge you to support LD 1971 and vote ought to pass.

Thank you for your time, and for your commitment to justice and equity in Maine.

Thank you,

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

Michelle Lamm, Executive Director

Greater Portland Family Promise