

Grace Valenzuela
Cumberland
LD 1971

May 19, 2025

Madam Chair and members of the Judiciary Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit my testimony today. My name is Grace Valenzuela, and I am here to express my strong support for LD 1971 and LD1259.

These bills are a necessary and timely measure that protects the integrity of local policing while ensuring the safety and trust of all our communities—regardless of immigration status. It prohibits law enforcement from using their authority to stop, investigate, or detain individuals solely for immigration enforcement purposes. This is critical for several reasons.

First, it upholds the constitutional rights of all Maine residents by ensuring that local and state law enforcement do not exceed their legal authority. Immigration enforcement is a federal responsibility. When local officers act as immigration agents, it not only exposes municipalities to legal liability, but also undermines the clear separation between local and federal jurisdictions and adds cost to Maine taxpayers.

Second, community trust in law enforcement is essential for public safety. When immigrants—regardless of legal status—fear that a traffic stop or call for help could lead to deportation, they are far less likely to report crimes, serve as witnesses, or cooperate with police investigations. This bill ensures that our local law enforcement officers are seen as protectors—not as agents of immigration enforcement.

Third, this bill allows law enforcement agencies to focus their resources on issues that directly affect public safety in Maine. They should not be burdened with the complex and unrelated task of enforcing federal immigration law—especially when doing so may damage relationships within the community and erode trust.

I urge this committee to support LD1971 and 1259 help make Maine a state where every resident—regardless of immigration status—feels safe calling 911, reporting a crime, or simply walking down the street without fear of profiling or unjust detention.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Grace Valenzuela
Cumberland, Maine