

Eisha Khan  
Biddeford  
LD 1259

My name is Eisha Khan and live in Biddeford. I am here in support of LD 1259 and LD 1971.

These bills are vital for a simple but powerful reason: they uphold the constitutional separation between state and federal authority—a foundational principle in our democracy. These bills uphold public safety by keeping immigration enforcement within the scope of federal authorities, not local police. When local law enforcement agencies are used—either formally or informally—as arms of federal immigration enforcement, it doesn’t just damage trust; it puts every Mainer at risk and exposes our towns and counties to significant financial and legal liabilities.

Taxpayers should not be footing the bill for lawsuits stemming from unlawful detentions, civil rights violations, or discriminatory practices. When local agencies hold individuals on federal civil immigration detainers without a judicial warrant or court order, they are vulnerable to legal action—and it is the taxpayers who are left to pay for these costly mistakes. Maine should not be in the business of assuming federal responsibilities that bring legal risk without legal authority.

Having had some interaction with law enforcement across Maine, especially in rural areas, I can tell you this: for many local officers building trust is a top priority. As the most rural state in the nation, Maine faces unique challenges in ensuring all residents—new and longtime—feel safe engaging with public institutions. Immigrants and rural Mainers alike are calling for stronger, more trusting relationships with law enforcement, not ones built on suspicion, racial profiling, and fear.

We need only to look at the failed “stop-and-frisk” practices in places like New York City to understand the long-term harm caused by profiling and suspicion-based policing. Those policies didn’t reduce crime, but they did traumatize communities, spark legal battles, and deepen the divide between police and the people they serve. We cannot afford to replicate these harmful and ineffective practices in Maine.

Community safety is not built through fear—it is built through connection, fairness, and trust. LD 1259 and LD 1971 uphold that approach by establishing clear boundaries that protect civil rights, reduce risk to taxpayers, and allow local law enforcement to focus on what they do best: keeping all of us safe.

I urge you to support both bills and vote Ought to Pass.

Thank you for your time and commitment to the people of Maine.

Sincerely, Eisha Khan