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Honorable members of the Judiciary Committee,

Two people were murdered in Minneapolis. That's not going to stop Mainers from protesting the violation of law, flagrant violence, and intimidation that immigration enforcement is carrying out every day in our neighborhoods, against our neighbors. It sure as hell should make you do something though - for starters, protecting our state, especially our most vulnerable residents, from physical and emotional harm.

I love this state, I love Portland, and I really don't want to see anyone die in our streets because we're trying to push back against federally-endorsed violence.

People aren't getting shot by ICE yet, but they're already being abducted. We've seen that ICE are abusing their power - pushing past doors without judicial warrants, smashing car windows, taking people who are here LEGALLY. I'm calling on my representatives, my state government to do absolutely everything in their power to stop this.

I have friends who live in Maine, on work and student visas. They are good people: They work hard, they volunteer, they pay their extra taxes for being here on 'alien' status, they share food, they are good friends to me, they're here legally, they haven't committed any crimes. They're still terrified because they know that it doesn't matter how 'right' they get it, they can still be punished in unspeakable ways.

This is the kind of thing we like to think of as happening in other countries, but not to us. Not in America, where anyone can "pull themselves up by their bootstraps" and have a good life, where we are explicitly allowed, encouraged even, to critique and shape our government. When I was a kid I read "In the Time of the Butterflies" by Julia Alvarez, a book based on the true story of sisters who were assassinated for their resistance to the Dominican Republic's dictator, Trujillo, in 1960. As a kid growing up in the Midwest, that's the kind of thing I never could've dreamed of seeing in my lifetime. But the kids I know in Maine, the kids I see playing on the street in front of my office, they won't have to imagine it or read about it in books. We have got to do something about this.