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Testimony of Rep. Rafael Macias in support of
**LD 1259, An Act to Enhance Public Safety in Maine by Defining the Relationship Between
Local and Federal Law Enforcement**

And

**LD 1971, An Act to Protect Workers in This State by Clarifying the Relationship of State
and Local Law Enforcement Agencies with Federal Immigration Authorities**

Before the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary

Good afternoon, Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and esteemed members of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary. My name is Rafael Macias. I represent House District 51, which includes part of Topsham, and I am here today in strong support of LD 1259 and LD 1971, two bills that draw a clear line between the responsibilities of state and local law enforcement and those of federal immigration authorities.

These bills do not aim to hinder immigration enforcement; they are about the constitution, states' rights, and public trust in our communities.

At the heart of this conversation is the Tenth Amendment, which reserves all powers not specifically delegated to the federal government to the states. Immigration enforcement is a federal responsibility. Our local law enforcement officers are not federal agents. They are community protectors, peacekeepers, and problem-solvers, not border patrol.

The Supreme Court has made this plain. In *Printz v. United States* and *Murphy v. NCAA*, the Court ruled that the federal government cannot commandeer state and local officers to carry out federal policy. That is the law. That is the U.S. Constitution. And any federal agency that pressures Maine to do otherwise, especially by withholding funding, is trampling on our sovereignty and turning cooperative federalism into coercive federalism.

Let us not forget what happens when we allow local law enforcement to blur the line between civil authority and federal enforcement. History offers chilling reminders. In Nazi Germany, the Gestapo did not begin as a massive, centralized force — it grew through local cooperation, bit by bit, until dissent became criminal, and fear ruled the streets.

We are not in 1930s Germany, but patterns of authoritarian overreach often begin with voluntary compliance — with asking police to act outside their proper role and justifying it “for public safety.”

But public safety is not achieved by racial profiling, by knocking on doors in immigrant neighborhoods without a warrant, or by asking officers to decide, without due process, who belongs and who doesn't. That's not safety. That's fear. And when people fear law enforcement, they stop calling for help, and that makes everyone less safe.

These bills also reflect a basic operational reality: our local law enforcement officers are already stretched thin. They are responding to mental health crises, overdose calls, domestic violence cases, and traffic fatalities, and they are doing it while working overtime, often with insufficient staffing.

Asking them to add federal immigration enforcement to their duties is not only outside of their job description, but it's fiscally irresponsible and operationally unwise. Suppose the federal government wants immigration laws enforced. In that case, it should do so with federal officers, federal training, and federal accountability, not by pushing it onto the shoulders of local deputies and detectives who have neither the time nor the mandate to do that work.

Supporting these bills does not mean opposing law and order. It means clarifying roles, restoring local control, and protecting constitutional limits.

LD 1259 and LD 1971 uphold the values that Maine has always stood for: thoughtful governance, clear boundaries, and respect for our state's rights and responsibilities. These bills protect the integrity of our law enforcement officers, community trust, and the constitution.

I urge this committee to vote “ought to pass” on both of these bills that protect your rights, too. Thank you.