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LD1259 AND LD1971

Chairpersons and members of the committee, thank you for hearing my testimony today.

I came to urge you to support LD1259 and LD1971 — bills that protect Mainers. New Mainers and generational ones. Families and children. Students and breadwinners. Hard working Mainers whose kids are in school with yours and whose taxes help fix our roads and bridges. Whose labor fuels all of Maine's cash crops and major industries.

It's an honor to be a part of this group of testifiers. In the decades to come, when my nieces and nephews, or my children, or their children, ask me how I faced this time of turmoil and strife, I will proudly say I testified in support of these bills. That the historical record shows we all came out today to protect our communities.

Because these bills will protect our communities. Local bodies do not get reimbursed for costs incurred by 287g agreements. Instead, all across the country, local departments are seeing their budgets drained by ICE. Opponents have spoken out against wasteful spending. I wonder where they are now.

LD1259 and LD1971 mean local funding will go to local issues, instead of subsidizing federal mandates. These bills will prevent school absences and lost wages, missed doctors appointments and health crises. It is imperative that they pass.

I work at a community based nonprofit. Organizations like ours are painfully aware of the effects of decreased state funding for local issues. Money that goes to federal law enforcement is not staying in your community. It does not uplift the vulnerable people you know. At times like this, social service nonprofits are called upon to do the impossible.

We're already spread paper thin. We work overtime. We build coalitions and partnerships. We organize volunteers. It isn't enough. We need material commitment from the state government that Maine money will stay in Maine, protecting ALL Maine people.

Thank you.