

TO: The Honorable Anne Carney - Chair
The Honorable Amy Kuhn - Chair
Honorable Members of the Judiciary Committee

DATE: May 19, 2025

RE: LD 1259 - An Act to Enhance Public Safety in Maine by Defining the
Relationship Between Local and Federal Law Enforcement

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

Dear Chairs Senator Carney and Representative Kuhn and members of the Judiciary Committee. My name is Kelly Merrill and I serve as the Co-Chair for the Maine Green Independent Party. I am here to testify in support of LD 1971 and LD 1259, acts that enhance public safety and workers by defining Relationship Between Local and Federal Law Enforcement.

As the current US Administration's anti-immigrant agenda pushes forward, we ask the state to provide clarity in ensuring that local law enforcement are not being coerced to participate in the illegal, violent, reckless and racist targeting of brown people. Local law enforcement needs probable cause to detain someone. ICE doesn't.

Economically, Maine relies heavily upon undocumented labor in the lobster, wild blueberry, sea-cucumber, lumber, and elder-care industries. They contribute \$15.6M to Maine's economy. \$96.7 BILLION to the country at large.

Further, police testified regarding a similar bill in 2021 that they did not want to burden local departments with enforcing federal laws that they are not trained in. This was the talking point for 2021, but the stark reality of ICE in 2025 is terrifying.

Their abuses have never been more apparent than they are this year when visa holders, noncitizens and citizens alike are being abducted off the streets and thrown into unmarked vehicles by armed, masked men who refuse to identify themselves. At the behest of the President, babies are being ripped from arms, car windows are being smashed in, and family members are being shipped far from their communities and children, and disappeared into a labyrinth of detention facilities and black sites.

We cannot abide a rogue agency deputizing local law enforcement and dictating terms to the people of Maine. Since its inception, ICE has had a sustained history of violence. Countless, egregious human rights violations are being committed by an agency that operates without transparency or accountability. We reject any cooperation between ICE or CBP and any local law enforcement in Maine.

We must resist these oppressions and abuses of people in our state. We urge you to vote OTP on LD 1259 and LD 1971.

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