

Support for:

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”

Good afternoon, Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn and honorable members of the Judiciary Committee. My name is Sass Borodkin, I live in Skowhegan, and my testimony is in favor of both LD 1259 and LD 1971.

I support these bills for different reasons. The first reason is because I’m the Executive Director of an organization that helps to develop and resource community organizers and activists, and it’s been horrifying to witness the way ICE is being used to silence people speaking out against the unimaginable acts of genocide in Gaza. Our rights are currently hanging on by a thread as it is, so further expanding the powers of the current administration by letting local law enforcement do their bidding is a terrible recipe for even more people of conscience getting kidnapped, ripped away from their families, and potentially being sent off to places that sanction torture, which as we’re seeing also appears to be fairly regardless of citizenship or resident status.

The impacts of deputizing the police for immigration enforcement will have a chilling effect on free speech, which is ridiculously important all the time, but especially now when tens of thousands of children and innocent people in Palestine are being intentionally starved, carpet bombed, and eradicated, one entire family to the next.

The second reason I’m in favor of these bills is because the only reason I survived the night my ex-partner snapped and decided to repeatedly slam my head into a wall, ripping chunks of hair out of my head from behind, and ultimately threatening me with one of my kitchen knives is because I was able to call for help after escaping his grasp and feel safe enough the next day to go to the courthouse to get a restraining order without any fear of being deported for doing those things. Regardless of citizenship status, all people should feel able to access the resources they have available to them for assistance when needed.

I do not typically support engaging the police because it’s my experience that they rarely create more safety in a situation, but when there are lacking alternatives for those in emergency situations, we need to safeguard the ability to call on the resources available.

These bills will be a step in ensuring people who need help can get it, and in helping to protect the rights we claim to hold as fundamental. Please vote ought to pass on both LD 1259 and LD 1971. Thanks.