

Testimony regarding bills LD 1259 and LD 1971

Collected May 17, 2025 in Chapman Park, Rockland Maine

By James Cook, Facilitator of The Audacity: Creative Action Together (audacityCAT.com)

The following is transcribed testimony of 11 residents of the state of Maine who are also members of The Audacity, a local grassroots group of individuals committed to taking nonviolent creative action together to respond to the wave of authoritarianism, bigotry, and corruption currently inundating the nation. We have no budget and operate entirely based on the contributions of our members.

The following testimony was taken in Chapman Park in Rockland, Maine on May 17, 2025, regarding LD 1971 and LD 1259, two legislative efforts to prevent law enforcement officials from collaborating with federal agents in certain regards. The Audacity is submitting this record of testimony to the Maine State Legislature for the hearing in Augusta at the Maine State House on May 18, 2025 which is scheduled for the bill.

For questions regarding this testimony or documentation of the explicit consent provided by the people named below to have their testimony transcribed and submitted for the legislative record, please contact James Cook of Camden, founder and facilitator of The Audacity, at jamescook@audacitycat.com.

Testimony of Shlomit Auciello of Thomaston

My name is Shlomit Auciello. I live in Thomaston, Maine. I'm looking at LDS 1259 and 1971 and I approve of both of these bills. Maine is a place where people have a good relationship with law enforcement. We know how to talk to each other. We know how to care for each other. We do not need the federal government taking over our law enforcement. If we choose to cooperate, it should be on a case-by-case basis with warrants and evidence. Thank you.

Testimony of Elissa Bower of Rockport

My name is Alyssa Bower. I live in Rockport, Maine. I am testifying today on bills LD 1259 and LD 1971. I approve of both of these bills. Currently, local law enforcement is not able to enforce immigration law and must cooperate with ICE, and I believe that this cooperation - the handing over of our local citizens to federal immigration customs enforcement and border patrol - is inappropriate. People are being shipped out of the state without the chance to stand up for themselves after routine traffic stops. So, both these bills would

give more authority to local police officers to deal with situations locally instead of having handing them over to the federal government. Thank you.

Testimony of David Statman of Rockland

My name is David Statman; I live in Rockland, Maine. I'm testifying on LD 1259 and 1971. I approve of those bills. I am the grandson of immigrants. At least three of my four grandparents are immigrants, and if not for due process and the welcoming that we had in this country, my grandparents would have been sent back to Nazi Europe and I wouldn't be here to be making this testimony. I think that due process is a core value in the United States, and the Constitution does not distinguish between citizens and noncitizens. Due process is for everyone and I think that we need to be supporting due process. which ICE seems to be ignoring today.

Testimony of Susan Beebe of Rockland

I'm Susan Beebe of Rockland, Maine. The bills are 1259 and 1971. I approve, because the police should not be collaborating with ICE, because they're targeting brown-skinned people in a racist fashion. Also, getting people by mistake and taking them to a hellish limbo. That is my testimony.

Testimony of Patty Gustafson of Warren

My name is Patty Gustafson of Warren, Maine. I'm testifying in support of LD 1259 and LD 1971, which prohibit Maine police and sheriffs from entering 287(g) agreements. They more broadly prohibit all Maine law enforcement agencies from collaborating with federal immigration authorities, while allowing for reasonable exceptions. It only makes sense that the state of Maine clarify its relationship with the federal government given that 1) immigration policy is currently being wielded as a political weapon, and 2) ICE agents not only disregard the constitutional rights of the people they accost but also exhibit a pattern of dehumanizing behavior toward those people. Please approve this legislation in order to protect the safety, security, and rights of all Maine residents. Thank you.

Testimony of James Cook of Camden

My name is James Cook. I live in Camden Maine, I vote, and I am stating my support for LD 1971 and LD 1259. These are two bills that would prevent law enforcement from being used to back up unconstitutional ICE activities which deny habeas corpus rights and due process rights. It drags law enforcement into work that is not theirs and furthermore it turns our local situation from one of support of people who need help, which is really what law enforcement officers should be for, to one in which police become agents of fear. People who are worried that they will be taken away, and so will be afraid to approach police if they get hurt, if they have their money taken, if they are robbed, if they are beaten, if they are raped. If ICE continues to collaborate with local law enforcement, immigrants won't have anyone to turn to. Is that the kind of society we want to live in? I don't think so; it's why we need to pass a bill like LD 1971, ideally, or barring that LD 1259. Thank you very much.

Testimony of Julee Johnson of Rockland

My name is Julie Johnson, I'm from Rockland Maine, and I am in support of the two bills: LD 1259 and LD 1971. I do approve of the bills, and mainly I think that because it relieves Maine law enforcement of the necessity of cooperating with ICE to solve a particular case, and I think immigration policy is being used as a political cudgel at this point especially for immigrants who are not criminals, even though they are said to be criminals because they're simply here without authorization. I think so many are being deported or being targeted. Actually, they are peaceful people who are doing work that we need done. because there are no ordinary citizens who are able to do it. So, I am in support of both of those bills. Thank you.

Testimony of Stephanie Mindykowski of Rockland

My name is Stephanie Mindicowski of Rockland, and I am in support of bills LD 1259 and LD 1971. The reason I approved of these bills is the fact that ICE is being very hot and heavy on these deportations in the last few months, especially taking immigrants off the street without any due process or even a hearing, and even separating their families. ICE is counting on local law enforcement to help them out, but the thing is if law enforcement helps them out they're just as complicit in the crime as ICE. So that's why I am supporting LD 1259 and LD 1971 Thank you

Testimony of Jeremy Chapman of Rockland

My name is Jeremy Chapman. I live in Rockland Maine, and I'm referring to House Bills 1259 and 1971. I'm for these bills, because I'm worried about having our local police aid ICE. I am opposed to this on two grounds: one, I think it is simply immoral. Two, I think it's illegal to disappear people without due process or disappear people at all.

Testimony of Jane Schroeder of Rockland

My name is Jane Schroeder; I live here in Rockland. No one has pressured me into doing this. No one has bribed me into doing this and no one has paid me to say the following: I want to support LD 1259 and LD 1971. I've already said that I support it because we've already had people in Maine even here in Rockland who have disappeared, and we don't know where they are, and we don't want any more of that. Our own police do a very good job; the state police do a very good job, so we don't need Homeland Security or ICE or any of those coming in with horrendous methods and just taking people away with no due process, no habeas corpus. We've got to stop this insanity. Thank you.

Testimony of Deborah Haviland of Rockland

My name is Deborah P. Haviland. I live in Rockland Maine and I am for these two bills: LD 1971 and LD1259. Please, please pass these bills. I do not think law enforcement officers should be used the way President Trump wants to use them and I think there are many other things that are in their job descriptions that are more important. Thank you so much for your time,