



Janet T. Mills
Governor

Michael J. Sauschuck
Commissioner

STATE OF MAINE
Department of Public Safety
MAINE STATE POLICE

45 Commerce Drive - Suite 1
Augusta, Maine 04333



COL. Bill G. Ross
Chief

LTC. Brian P. Scott
Deputy Chief

Testimony of Major Lucas W. Hare
Maine State Police

OPPOSED to LDs 1259 & 1971

An Act to Enhance Public Safety in Maine by Defining the Relationship Between Local and Federal Law Enforcement

Sponsored by Representative Hasenus of Readfield
and

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

Sponsored by Representative DHALAC of South Portland
Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn and other distinguished members of the joint standing committee on Judiciary, my name is Major Lucas Hare, and I am here representing the Maine State Police and the Maine Department of Public Safety to testify in OPPOSITION to LD 1259 and LD 1971.

The Department of Public Safety truly appreciates the intent behind these well-meaning bills, but we are concerned about the potential negative public safety impacts they may have on our state.

Effective communication ensures that officers across different jurisdictions can coordinate their actions, share vital information and collaborate to address public safety issues, such as investigations, real time emergencies, or criminal activity that spans multiple jurisdictions. These proposed bills would severely hamper communication between local, county, and state law enforcement and our federal partners who are now, or may be in the future, tasked with immigration enforcement duties.

The broad language contained in LD 1259 could be interpreted to prevent communication and coordination on its most basic level by prohibiting “written or oral contracts, agreements or arrangements” that grants-even temporary immigration enforcement authority to Maine law enforcement.

The statute defining MSP powers and duties includes a specific provision authorizing the Maine State Police, upon the request of a federal agency, to provide assistance for public safety purposes only. 25 MRS §1502. This LD would prohibit our responding to a federal call for help if there was a public safety risk which overlapped with immigration.



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Our federal law enforcement partners have task forces with members from Maine's law enforcement community – for examples, a drug task force with DEA and a violent offense task force with Federal Bureau of Investigations. Each of those task forces may incidentally come upon an immigration issue when performing their base duties. This LD may require local law enforcement to withdraw from all those task forces further hampering effective communication and reducing public safety.

LD 1971 does include allowances for cooperation for some criminal conduct, which we appreciate but is far too restrictive. It creates confusion and jurisdictional issues within local, county and state government. The Department of Public Safety and the Maine State Police believe in the rule of law and due process, however, this bill allows for protections that no other crimes receive. By eliminating the ability for law enforcement to respond to immigration detainers and administrative warrants this bill significantly reduces law enforcement's ability to work with our federal partners.

If enacted into law LD 1971 could impact millions of dollars in federal grant funding the Department of Public Safety is currently receiving annually. The loss of this revenue to the Maine State Police, an agency that is smaller now than it was in 1990, would have a direct impact on rural patrol services and public safety.

On behalf of the State Police and the Department of Public Safety, we appreciate your careful consideration of these issues and ask that you vote LDs 1259 and 1971 ought not to pass.