

To: Honorable Chairs: Sen. Anne Carney, Rep. Amy D. Kuhn
Honorable Members of the Judiciary Committee

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

and

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

Date of Public Hearing: May 19, 2025 1:00PM

Date: May 18, 2025

My name is Ginger Jones and write today as a resident of Portland. I am testifying in favor of LD 1259 AND LD 1971.

I am a volunteer mentor with Welcoming the Stranger, a Portland-based nonprofit that matches volunteers with asylum seekers to help better integration into the community. My husband and I volunteered with two families over the last three years and found them to be very responsible, honest people working to be good community citizens. Welcoming the Stranger has a list-serve for volunteer mentors to post needs ranging from securing a baby stroller to resources on complicated issues like housing, jobs, or immigration.

This last week, mentors reported on the list serve that several New Mainers have been detained by ICE and removed out of state, although they appear to have legal immigration status and no criminal backgrounds. Rumors are flying that partnerships with local law enforcement and possible parking violations, burnt-out headlights, or expired auto registrations triggered the arrests and detentions.

We all want safe and secure neighborhoods, and that actual criminals, whatever their backgrounds, are prosecuted. However, local jurisdiction issues should not be intermingled with federal immigration issues and local police officers should not be partnering in ICE activities. I do not support local law enforcement effectively being tuned into ICE agents through three types of 287(g) partnerships: (Task Force Model, Warrant Service Officer, Jail Enforcement Model) giving local police immigration enforcement and oversight during local police duties.

I support LD 1971 and LD 1259 recognizing:

- Maine law enforcement's responsibilities are not those of Homeland Security. Maine law enforcement is not trained in the complexities of federal immigration law.
- Don't strain our resources: Given current challenges with municipal and state funding, we need our law enforcement to stay focused on local community and Maine issues.

- All people in Maine should have access to safety, health, job, and educational opportunities; so law enforcement, health care facilities, schools, churches, and job sites must remain spaces without fear of retaliation.
- The 287(g) agreements undermine public safety to decreasing trust in local law enforcement and create barriers to open communications which could help solve or prevent crime.
- Protect Due Process: The constitution's guarantees of due process and equal protection apply to everyone in the United States, regardless of immigration status. Violations of constitutional rights have been violated in other states, and let us assure that does not happen in Maine.
- Increases Police Liability: Federal immigration practices are often violating constitutional rights. We do not want our local officers participating in these violations themselves and potentially facing costly lawsuits.
- Immigrants are a critical driver of Maine's economy and can provide a richness of diversity and new perspectives. We need them, and should not be undermining their successful integration into our communities through undue fear and targeting.