

Matthew Loosigian
Woolwich, ME
LD 1259

Dear members of the Judiciary Committee,

When I heard that the Wells Police department had signed onto the 287(g) program to work with ICE in early May 2025, I was infuriated and terrified at the implications. This program aims to deputize municipal police forces to assist with illegal arrests of community members. It would cause a complete loss of trust among the public for their local police force, and would increase fear among residents toward the very people who have taken an oath to serve and protect them. I urge the Judiciary Committee to pass LD1259 to the legislature for a vote with the strongest recommendation possible.

The program has shown to also cost municipalities lots of money due to increased salaries of police forces and legal settlements and lawsuits from illegal profiling and violating people's civil rights. For instance, Maricopa County, AZ paid \$43million for lawsuits related to its 287(g) agreement. This at a time when the federal government is cutting funding for important services in our state that keep the most vulnerable among us barely getting by. Our municipal and state budgets are needing to make up for sudden shortfalls to support library services, food pantries, shelters, and likely hospitals in the very near future. The cost of 287(g) agreements would therefore need to be passed on to citizens through property tax hikes at a time when people will be struggling with increased prices, less food security, and loss of medical coverage.

ICE has been tasked illegally with detaining legal residents without warrants in many cases, and these people are being held without due process. Many have been sent to an inhumane prison in El Salvador, and in one case (Abrego Garcia) the Executive administration has defied a Supreme Court order to comply with a Circuit Court order to facilitate his return for more than a month. Calling this what it is - kidnapping, human trafficking, and concentration camps is an accurate depiction of the situation.

A clear statement must be made that Maine will not participate in this "mass deportation" effort. The state needs to push back against this authoritarian fear tactic in every way possible.

Thank you for supporting the passage of LD1259

Sincerely,
Matthew Loosigian
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