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04364
LD 1971

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn and honorable members of the Judiciary Committee. I am Rachel Statham and I live in Winthrop, ME. I am here to testify in favor of LD 1259 and LD 1971.

While I could go into length on how investing state resources in punitive systems such as policing does not result in the outcomes many people assume they will and takes away from other life-giving services that actually help our communities grow and thrive, I don't think that would move you; some people like to hold power over other people and would rather not see the current system that keeps them there dismantled.

So instead, I ask you a different question—what happens to Maine economy when you scare away (or worse, hold hostage and torture) 4.5% of its labor force? What happens when you abruptly disrupt 1.7 billion dollars in incoming revenue for Maine businesses? When you collect \$625.1 million less in taxes to fund our schools, infrastructure, and public lands?

Despite the myth of the "violent criminal" immigrant, Mainers who welcome their neighbors come to know friendly faces: people who work hard and help sustain the communities they are a part of. They contribute to Medicare and Social Security—services needed by many in Maine to feed themselves, maintain shelter, and stay healthy.

The US and Maine Constitutions (Article I, Sections 1, 5, 6, 6A, 7, 9 & 10) protect the rights of all people, not just birth-right citizens. There is no exception to whom these rights apply. Yet, since February at least 21 people have been detained for deportation. All of them with documentation to live and work. None of them have criminal records or arrested for breaking the law. Is our Constitution legitimate in your eyes? Your vote on these bills gives us your answer.

Vote in favor of LD 1259 and LD 1971. Thank you for your time.