

Neptune Adams

February 19, 2020

Testimony for Public Hearing on LD 2094

"An Act To Implement the Recommendations of the Task Force on Changes to the
Maine Indian Claims Settlement Implementing Act"

Dawn Neptune Adams

Member of the Penobscot Nation, Journalist with Sunlight Media Collective

Tribal leaders, Senator Carpenter, Representative Bailey, distinguished members of the
Committee, and Relatives listening near and far:

Kkweyy Kkweyy (Greetings) N'dleweezee Dawn Neptune Adams. (My name is Dawn
Neptune Adams) Niyajoan Pahuwubskewi, (I am Penobscot) neegee weegee Bangor. (I
live in Bangor)

I stand before you as a mother of a Penobscot child, a granddaughter of the Penobscot
Nation, a journalist with Sunlight Media Collective, and an activist. I am here to speak in
favor of LD 2094.

First, I'd like to thank the Task Force for all the hard work they've done over the last
several months. The dedication that you've all shown in the arduous learning process of
studying federal Indian law is commendable. Your thoughtful questions and earnest
inquiries about our lives under the Maine Indian Land Claims Settlement Act are a
testament to your commitment to fairness and equality. I appreciate the time you've
spent to come up with these 22 consensus recommendations which have been handed
to the Standing Committee on the Judiciary in the form of this bill, LD 2094.

Second, as an environmental activist and defender of our Relative, the Penobscot
River, I often come to Augusta to speak at hearings about various bills put forth before
the Environment and Natural Resources Committee. I speak until I'm interrupted at the
three-minute mark and then listen as industrial polluters speak as long as they wish.
Past oppressors of Wabanaki people stare down at me from portraits on the wall while I
wait to hear the outcome of the issue of the day, which is almost always a blatant
disrespect of Wabanaki sovereignty and stewardship, and the granting of permits to
industries that pollute our River. I can only imagine how my Elders feel, coming here
after so many years of disappointment. They've lived through more than forty years of
the Settlement Act and the demotion of our great Nations to mere municipality status. I
will continue to speak up for the River and the Natural world around us because that is
who I am as Panuwubskewi, Penobscot person. I care about my fellow Tribal members
who catch and eat the fish while practicing a culture that predates this state by

thousands of years. The recommendations of the Task Force, including recommendations number seven, eight, and nine will put to rest many of the issues we face when we have to stand up to industrial polluters with the deck stacked against us before we even begin.

Wabanaki people never gave up their sovereignty nor the right to defend their Relatives. I'm not here to ask the State of Maine to grant us the inherent sovereignty we already have; I am here to ask that you respect and recognize our sovereignty so we can properly care for our Relatives. Not just for me and my daughter but for the next seven generations and all our Relations.

N'delnabamuk. (All our Relations)