

Elizabeth Peters
Winthrop
LD 25

Dear Sirs and Madams of the Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry Committee and the Legislature and Senate at large:

I asked Senator Craig Hickman to spearhead this addendum to allow free access to any state run park or historical monument by members of any federally recognized tribe. I did so because as a member of the Aroostook Band Of MicMac, I was surprised and then angered by the fact that members of the indigenous tribes of our state, or any state, should pay for access to lands that were once their lands and that were stolen from them by colonizers. My calls to regional park managers only confirmed that they did not feel we should have free access. I could list the many egregious things that have been done to all of the indigenous peoples of this state and others, as well as Canada, but my time is better spent to tell you that this would be one tiny step in healing the past wrongs against First Nations. Our people understand the delicate balance of our world and how we need to protect and understand the intricate spiritual and physical cycle of our planet. We are the first stewards, and easing our access to these lands will only help to keep them better protected. Thank you for your time.