

Theodore Kanellakis
Camden
LD 78

Written testimony by the Rev. Theodore Kanellakis, resident of Camden, Maine; offered in support of LD 78 Resolution Proposing an Amendment to Article X of the Constitution of Maine Regarding the Publication of Maine Indian Treaty Obligations, introduced by Representative. Rachel Talbot Ross of Portland.

Submitted for the Public Hearing before the Maine Legislature's Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary, March 7, 2023

Sen. Carney, Rep. Moonen, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary, my name Theodore Kanellakis and I have served on the Committee on Indian Relations of the Episcopal Diocese of Maine as past Chair and to date as a member for more than fifteen years. Thank you for the opportunity for me to offer testimony in support of this bill.

I will keep this brief and to the point. When former Maine Governor, Nelson Dingley, Jr. (1874-1876) during his address to the Maine Legislature, proclaimed that the Maine Constitution of 1820 had in 50 plus years become a "patchwork" document in need of codification; he set into motion a plan for Amending the original Document.

What came from that plan, was a convenient and cleverly devised manipulation of parts of the original written intentions and actions of the officials of Massachusetts to honor and hold legitimate and valid, any previous treaties and agreements made between the Commonwealth and the Wabanaki Nations of the territories which were now to become Maine to be part of this agreement. These were written in Article X sections 1, 2, and 5 of the new state's Constitution.

The Amendments proposed effecting this Article and these sections, refers to the Articles and sections as still being in effect, but, here is the unbelievable (kicker) although they would continue to be in effect, they were prohibited from being allowed to be printed in copies of the Amended Constitution. They would be eluded to, but not visible. 'Out of side and out of mind'.

In reality, all who would read the amended Constitution were denied the truth of the original intent of that document from being known. I believe that, every legislative action which has effected the treatment and rights of our Wabanaki neighbors, guaranteed in treaties and agreements has been undertaken without the free ability of our elected officials, as well as all of us for that matter, to have full and transparent understanding of the foundational document of Maine's original Constitution, from that time and for nearly 150 years by this act of omission.

The good news is that the return of the intent and agreed to Constitution of Maine, with Article X sect. and the sections mentioned are still in effect and can be resurrected with the passage of LD 78, and you our much appreciated Legislators can do this by your correcting an long awaited travesty of justice.

Please do; 'Recommend Ought to Pass' for this bill and follow it with your support, encouragement and vote when it comes before the Maine State Legislature in the near future.

Sincerest thanks,
Theodore Kanellakis, Camden