

Kelly Merrill
Skowhegan
LD 78

RESOLUTIONS - Proposing an Amendment to Article X of the Constitution of
Maine Regarding the Publication of Maine Indian Treaty Obligations

Dear Speaker Rachel Talbott-Ross, Senator Rick Bennett, Committee members, and
esteemed tribal members:

My name is Kelly Merrill and I am an activist and community organizer, currently
focused on indigenous issues, harm reduction, prison reform, and LGBTQIA+ rights.
I live in Abenaki territory in what is now known as Skowhegan.

I urge you to pass LD 78 / 578, a resolution which proposes a constitutional
amendment to require that the text of Article X Section 5 of the Constitution of
Maine, which pertains to Maine treaty obligations, be included in any printed copies
of the Constitution included with the laws of the State. Section 5 “remain[s] in full
force,” regardless of it not being printed, so the printing of that section will simply
resolve its 150-year absence from the printed constitution.

The absence of Article X Section 5 is a reminder of the continuation of the erasure of
indigenous people and the State’s obligations to them. It is a minimal step the State
can take toward respecting its relationship with sovereign people. It is the
transparency we need in relationship with Wabanaki people.

Respectfully submitted,
Kelly Merrill