



**Testimony of Maine Public Health Association in Support of:  
LD 78: RESOLUTION: Proposing an Amendment to Article X of the Constitution of Maine Regarding  
Publication of Maine Indian Treaty Obligations  
and  
LD 578: RESOLUTION: Proposing an Amendment to the Constitution of Maine Concerning the  
Publication of Maine Indian Treaty Obligations**

Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary  
State House, Room 438  
Tuesday, March 7, 2023

Good afternoon, Senator Carney, Representative Moonen, and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary. My name is Rebecca Boulos. I am a resident of South Portland and executive director of Maine Public Health Association.

MPHA is the state's oldest, largest, and most diverse association for public health professionals. We represent more than 700 individual members and 60 organizations across the state. The mission of MPHA is to improve and sustain the health and well-being of all people in Maine through health promotion, disease prevention, and the advancement of health equity. As a statewide nonprofit association, we advocate, act, and advise on critical public health challenges, aiming to improve the policies, systems, and environments that underlie health inequities – but which also have potential to improve health outcomes for all people in Maine. We are not tied to a national agenda, which means we are responsive to the needs of Maine's communities, and we take that responsibility seriously.

MPHA is in support of LD 78: "RESOLUTION: Proposing an Amendment to Article X of the Constitution of Maine Regarding Publication of Maine Indian Treaty Obligations" and LD 578: "RESOLUTION: Proposing an Amendment to the Constitution of Maine Concerning the Publication of Maine Indian Treaty Obligations." These bills propose to amend the Maine Constitution to require that the text of Article X, Section 5, which pertains to Indian treaty obligations, be included in printed copies of the Constitution.

While this obligation language was removed in 1876, Section 5 has always "remain[ed] in full force." The removal of these obligations from printed copies of the Constitution serves as erasure, even if the obligations were enforceable by law. Reinstating their inclusion in printed versions of the Constitution improves transparency and voter education of Maine history and treaty obligations; and is one step toward improving relations between the State of Maine and the Wabanaki Nations.

Thank you for considering our testimony.