

We in Maine have a moral duty to implement LD 1970, the Maine Indian Child Welfare Act, into law.

I testify

- as a descendant of English settlers in New England and across the country, who profited from the genocide against the people living here, from the time when our family patriarch arrived in Connecticut in 1632.
- in memory of the 1890 Wounded Knee Massacre, in which soldiers used four rapid-fire cannon with our family name on them to kill hundreds of men, women and children.
- from hearing shocking stories of the horrors of the so-called Indian Boarding Schools, both in the US and Canada, up through 1996.
- with awareness of the Maine Wabanaki-State Child Welfare Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which found evidence of cultural genocide in this state, through failure to comply with the 1978 federal Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA), and under 'the 1948 United Nations Convention's definition of genocide, Article 2 Sections b and e. These reference an intent to destroy through "causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group" and "forcibly transferring children of the group to another group." ' (finding #4 of the Commission's report in 2015).

Although Maine has come a long way, the efforts at genocide from within the United States continue, with the latest legal attack against ICWA now awaiting an imminent decision from the Supreme Court. To prevent potential serious damage to the survival of tribes and to child welfare in general, more than 20 states have passed their own state-level versions of this acknowledged model for effective and humane child welfare practice.

ICWA must be strengthened, not destroyed. Please pass LD 1970, unanimously and expeditiously.

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