

To: Senator Carney, Representative Moonen, and honorable members of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary

From: Janet Hough, 401 S Edmunds Rd, Edmunds Twp ME 04628

Re: **Support for L.D. 2004: An Act to Restore Access to Federal Laws Beneficial to the Wabanaki Nations**

I am submitting this testimony in support of LD 2004 An Act to Restore Access to Federal Laws Beneficial to the Wabanaki Nations.

LD 2004 would enable the Wabanaki Tribes in Maine to again be included in federal laws which are passed to benefit Tribes in the US. The other 570 federally recognized Tribes and their surrounding communities benefit from economic opportunities which are denied to Tribes in Maine, and by extension to the non-native communities surrounding them. Automatic access was removed according to terms dictated by the 1980 Maine Indian Claims Settlement Act, which stipulated that to be included in any federal law benefitting US Tribes which was passed after 1980, the Tribes of Maine needed to be specifically named in that law – a unique burden that is imposed on no other US Tribe.

Some have suggested that Maine should look at each piece of legislation passed on a case by case basis. Do you have any idea how long that would take? To take just one example, in 2013 the Violence Against Woman's Act was amended to include Native American women. However, the Tribes in Maine were not named, and so were not included. It took Maine seven years to finally pass state legislation mirroring the federal law.

LD 2004 does not circumvent the 1980's Settlement Act. It simply changes a provision in the Act, to begin a process of including the tribes in Maine in new federal legislation.

Please support LD 2004 to start putting the tribes on a path to prosperity.