

Adrienne Horne
Appleton
LD 2004

Testimony in Support of LD 2004 “An Act to Restore Access to Federal Laws Beneficial to the Wabanaki Nations”

May 30, 2023

Dear Senator Carney, Representative Moonen, and honorable members of the Committee on Judiciary,

My name is Adrienne Horne and I’m a resident of Appleton, ME. I am writing today in support of LD 2004: “An Act to Restore Access to Federal Laws Beneficial to the Wabanaki Nations”.

I support this bill as a matter of fairness. Currently, the Wabanaki tribes of Maine are not treated fairly when compared to the other 570 federally recognized tribes. Unlike the other federally recognized tribes, the tribes in Maine must be explicitly written into federal legislation thanks to a provision of Maine’s 1980 Settlement Act. This is not fair and is an undue burden to Wabanaki tribes. There is a reason that when we pass state legislation we do not require specific towns to be added to each piece of state legislation. It wouldn’t be realistic to expect our state senators and state representatives to amend each bill to name each town specifically, but this is what we are asking tribes in Maine to do while other tribes automatically benefit from federal legislation. According to Suffolk University, 151 federal laws have been passed that tribes in Maine do not have access to. Without legislation to correct the root cause of this unfairness, there has been an attempt to pass legislation in Maine on a case by case basis to catch up with the federal benefits. Unfortunately, this has not been successful. It took seven years for tribes in Maine to receive benefits on par with the Violence Against Women's Act that was amended federally to include Native American women from all other federally recognized tribes. This is unacceptable not only for the tribes in Maine, but for our rural Maine communities. When tribes in Maine have access to federal funding and other benefits, surrounding rural areas benefit as well, and when these benefits are delayed or withheld all together, we all suffer.

LD 2004 doesn’t undo the 1980’s Settlement Act, it simply changes a provision in the act that would begin the process of treating tribes in Maine more fairly and more in line with the 570 other federally recognized tribes. Please join me in supporting LD 2004 and the path to fairness for the tribes and rural Maine.

Thank you for considering my testimony, and thank you for all the work that you do.

Sincerely,
Adrienne Horne
Appleton, ME