

Katherine Carter
Hampden
LD 2007

Support for the Inherent Right of Tribal Sovereignty
Of the Wabanaki People and Support for LD 2007 currently before the Maine State
Legislature that would Recognize and Implement Tribal Sovereignty

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

From: Katherine Carter, Hampden, ME; kaycarter08@gmail.com; 207-944-7814
American Friends Service Committee (Quakers) Wabanaki Program Committee

Re: Support for LD 2007, An Act to Advance Self-determination for Wabanaki
Nations

Senator Carney, Representative Harnett, and members of the Judiciary Committee,
my name is

Katherine Carter and I am testifying on behalf of the American Friends Service
Committee (Quaker) Wabanaki Program Committee (AFSC). The AFSC has worked
with the Wabanaki Nations since the 1950's, focusing our efforts on a partnership
with the Wabanaki to support their community goals.

We in Maine have before us a historic opportunity to right 44 years of wrongs done to
Wabanaki tribal communities. The terms in the 1980 Maine Indian Claims Settlement
Act and the Maine Implementing Act have proven disastrous for the tribes, and this
bill is designed to address those wrongs.

Since 1980, Wabanaki tribes in Maine have been prevented from benefiting from over
150 federal laws designed to assist and support tribal health, safety, well-being, and
self-determination. Wabanaki tribes here also contend with restrictions and
complicated regulations imposed by the Implementing Act that are not experienced by
the 570 federally-recognized tribes residing outside of Maine. As a result, tribes in
Maine suffer from disadvantages not found in any other state. The vast majority of
states where tribes are located abide by federal Indian law, which these bills propose.
Through provisions and even requirements contained in federal Indian law, many of
these states enjoy and celebrate productive relationships that benefit the tribes, the
surrounding non-Native communities, and the states. Time and again, it has been
shown that when the tribes are prosperous, surrounding rural communities are
prosperous. This is our opportunity to create this reality for Wabanaki communities,
for our rural areas, and for Maine as a whole.

The current situation imposed by the State of Maine on Wabanaki peoples is morally
and ethically wrong. Because of the restrictive and onerous terms of the settlement
acts, Maine was the subject of a 2013 United Nations investigation that described
inequities as rising to the level of human rights violations. Tribal communities only
want what tribes in other states enjoy—greater freedom to control their own destiny
and to thrive. We have in LD 2007 the means to make this possible. Let's be able to
say that this year Maine took this honorable and meaningful step toward greater
prosperity for our Wabanaki neighbors, for rural communities and for our State.
AFSC Wabanaki Program Committee strongly urges you to unanimously vote "ought
to pass" on LD 2007.

Thank you,

Katherine Carter (kaycarter08@gmail.com); 207-944-7814
For the AFSC Wabanaki Program Committee