

To: Sen. Carney, Rep. Moonen, and members of the Maine Joint Standing Committee on  
Judiciary  
From: Rebecca Darr  
Re: Support for LD 2007, An Act to Advance Self-determination for Wabanaki  
Nations

Senator Carney, Representative Moonen, and members of the Judiciary Committee,

My name is Rebecca Darr and I've lived in Brunswick since purchasing a home here in 2009. I am also a businessperson and entrepreneur. I am writing this to testify in support of LD 2007.

I've had the chance to interact with one Sioux/ Lakota tribe in my volunteer work mentoring social entrepreneurs around the world. And what resources that tribe has access to as they, for example, begin to repopulate the Plains with American buffalo, which will produce economic, cultural, and environmental benefits, along with humanely raised meat for non-Lakota people. This experience has helped me see what Native stewardship in action can really mean. (Hands down, this tribe also had the best thought out business plan I've seen in a decade.) Their example makes me hopeful for what the Wabanaki Nations could create in our corner of the world – if LD 2007 is passed.

For me, passing LD 2007 is primarily about fairness. Due to restrictions imposed by the 1980 MICSA, the Wabanaki Nations have been denied the significant economic growth experienced by the other 570 federal tribes over the past 40 years who've had full access to federal policies. Removing the obstacles would help the Wabanaki Nations take advantage of federal self-determination policies, programs, and funding that elsewhere in Indian Country led to the creation of thousands of jobs and hundreds of millions of dollars in revenue produced by Native businesses.

But it is not just the people of the Wabanaki Nations who would benefit from passing LD 2007. According to a recent Harvard report, tribal self-government would likely mean an additional \$330M per year in Maine's GDP, more than 2,700 jobs, and \$39M per year in new state and local tax revenue. Based on the evidence from other tribes, better than half the new jobs created will likely be filled by Wabanaki neighbors in rural Maine.

Likewise, the Wabanaki have been protecting the environment and maintaining sustainable practices for thousands of years before the Europeans settled here. Their land stewardship will benefit us all.

It's time to modernize this broken deal and begin a new era of partnership with the Wabanaki Nations for the benefit of everyone in Maine. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,  
Rebecca Darr

Rebecca Darr  
Brunswick  
LD 2007

please see attachment (2-22-24 Darr Wabanaki support for LD2007.pdf)