

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

My name is Nathan Davis, and I live in Rockland. I serve on the Rockland City Council, but I write as a private citizen.

I write in support of LD 2007, An Act to Advance Self-determination for Wabanaki Nations.

I am not competent to evaluate the particular legal matters raised by this legislation, but I do understand the history and structure of the Settlement Acts in broad strokes, as well as the differences between the rights of the Wabanaki Nations and those of other federally recognized tribal nations. LD 2007 would restore to the Wabanaki Nations some of the capacity for self-governance that history has denied them, and that federal law grants to others.

This capacity for self-governance would necessarily come at the cost of some state and municipal authority. My reading of LD 2007 is that this transfer of authority is unlikely to materially harm the state, municipalities, or people of Maine. And even if it were to result in some small harm, the harm of the Settlement Acts - both moral and practical - seems far greater. The moral harm is that of the suppression of fundamental rights under the guise of paternal and benevolent stewardship. The practical harm is that of economic opportunity denied and all the social ills that attend to the burden of centuries of colonialism.

I urge you to vote "ought to pass" on LD 2007, and I thank you for your service.

Sincerely,
Nathan Davis
Rockland