



# Friends of Casco Bay Casco BAYKEEPER

February 23, 2024

Judiciary Committee  
c/o Legislative Information Office  
100 State House Station  
Augusta, ME 04333

Re: Testimony in Support of LD 2007: Tribal Self-Determination

Dear Senator Carney, Representative Moonan and Distinguished Members of the Judiciary Committee,

Friends of Casco Bay supports LD 2007 which represents years of hard work and includes all of the recommendations from the 2020 tribal commission to restore tribal self-determination to the Passamaquoddy Tribe, the Penobscot Nation and the Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians.

Friends of Casco Bay formed in 1989 to improve and protect the environmental health of Casco Bay. We monitor the Bay, and use that data to advocate for solutions that improve and protect the health of the Bay and the waters that nourish it. As Casco Baykeeper, my role is to speak for the waters, to ensure we strive to live in harmony with and in gratitude for them.

Before European colonization of Casco Bay, Indians populated its shores and cared for the Bay. Many of Casco Bay's coves and islands bear names that reflect the region's rich indigenous history. For example, the Abenaki called the Bay Aucocisco, or "the place of the herons," named Chebeague Island which means "isle of many springs," and Maquoit Bay which means "bear bay," for bears once drawn to its shores by runs of Atlantic Salmon. Many places and businesses still use these indigenous place names, in fact 3 Casco Bay Lines ferries bear indigenous names. Along the shore and on some islands, you can find spear and harpoon points, fish bones, and shell heaps from tribal camps. Researchers study these shell middens to compare the level of carbon in them to the levels in contemporary shells. This comparison will further our understanding of the effects of ocean acidification on modern shellfish. The Passamaquoddy Language Keeper is working on a map to restore indigenous names to places on and along Casco Bay. He spoke at our 2023 annual meeting, where his inclusive message inspired our members.

We are so grateful for his efforts and for tribal efforts to work in harmony with us to cherish and steward our waters. We have read LD 2007, which takes a thoughtful approach to acknowledging and restoring tribal self-determination. We request that you unanimously vote that LD 2007 Ought To Pass and look forward to learning from the tribes how we might better, together care for our waters. As the Passamaquoddy Language Keeper graciously says: "We are all in this together." Let's honor that.

Respectfully submitted,

Ivy L. Frignoca, Casco Baykeeper

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