

Judith Valentine
Gorham, Maine
LD 2007

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

To: Sen. Carney, Rep. Moonen, and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on
Judiciary

From: Judith Valentine, Gorham, Maine

Intro:

Dear Senator Carney, Representative Moonen, and members of the Judiciary
Committee, my name is Judith Valentine and I live in Gorham, ME. I am an
education professional. I am writing to testify in support of LD 2007.

Due to restrictions imposed by the 1980 Maine Indian Claims Settlement Act
(MICSA), the Wabanaki Nations have been kept from achieving the significant
economic growth experienced by the other 570 federal tribes over the past 40 years
who've had full access to federal policies of self-determination. Removing those
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 goods
and services produced by Native businesses.

The Wabanaki have been protecting the environment and maintaining sustainable
ecological practices for millennia, long before European settlement of Maine. They
will continue to do so; it's their heritage and birthright as Wabanaki peoples.

It's time to remove the barriers that have kept the Wabanaki, along with their
neighbors in rural Maine, from achieving the dramatic and sustained economic
growth achieved over the past 40 years by 570 federal tribes across Indian Country.

Thank you.