

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

From: Louise Gephart, Brunswick, ME 04011

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

Intro: Sen. Carney, Rep. Moonen and members of the Judiciary Committee, my name is Louise Gephart and I live in Brunswick. I am sending written testimony in support of LD 2007.

Testimony: I am not a member of the Wabanaki Nation. My ancestors immigrated to this country from Great Britain and Western Europe at various times over the past 200 years. Over that time, our families have thrived on land taken from the Wabanaki and other Native American nations in New England and the Mid-West. My Unitarian Universalist faith, a pillar of which is fair and equitable rights for all beings, requires me to speak out on this issue. I cannot turn back the clock and make my ancestors behave in a more just and equitable manner, but it seems like the least that can be done is to restore the rights of self-determination to the Wabanaki people. It is not the place of non-Natives to dictate how they will govern themselves, and It is only just that they are afforded the same rights as other Native American nations in the United States. It is their native land. We know that the Wabanaki will care for their land and each other in accordance with their sacred beliefs and should be given the right to thrive in the manner that they see fit. I know that I will be ashamed of my state if the Wabanaki rights are not advanced. As they will thrive, it will benefit all of us, spiritually and materially.

Closing: Thank you for reading this testimony. I hope that you will stand on the side of justice and equity and put LD 2007 forward as "ought to pass."

Louise Gephart
Brunswick
LD 2007

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Judiciary

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