

February 23, 2024

To the Legislature and Governor Mills;

It is unjust and unfair that Maine's tribes are prevented from charting their own future due to an outdated document from 1980, a document that was meant to be amended. The Wabanaki deserve to participate in the economic growth that many other tribes are experiencing today, but cannot because of the restrictions of the ill-conceived MICSA. Many of our rural regions would benefit economically should the tribes be allowed to develop new businesses and recreational opportunities that would demand workers and would bring in much needed tax revenues. For all these reasons, LD 2007 should be passed.

On a more personal note, as a not-quite-Mainer (I live here now, but am from away), I am a frequent visitor to the North Woods. In fact, I just returned from a winter camping adventure in the Debsconeags Lakes region where evidence of lynx and snowshoe hare and Eastern cottontail rabbits abounds. These wild lands, and others, would not exist as they do had the Wabanaki not protected them, using sustainable environmental practices thousands of years before White colonial settlers arrived. I am certain that members of the Maine legislature are also grateful for our vast, relatively untouched, restorative wild lands. Passage of LD 2007 would allow the Wabanki to continue and perhaps increase their protection of and advocacy for the most beautiful and definitive regions of Maine.

Please vote to pass LD 2007 and end the decades-long legalized oppression of Maine's tribes. It would benefit all Mainers, not only the tribes. And we owe them.

Respectfully,

Sarah Shmitt  
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