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Swanville
LD 2007

My name is Maura McCampbell, I live in Swanville, ME, and I support LD 2007 - An Act to Advance Self-determination for Wabanaki Nations. I believe that LD 2007 is a vital step in healing our nation's long and ongoing practices of Indigenous oppression. As a white person – a settler in these lands – I believe it is important to listen to and honor the voices of Indigenous communities on whose land I inhabit. I support the Wabanaki Nation's inherent right to self-determination and I support LD 2007 as an advancement of these disenfranchised rights.

Indigenous author Jessica Hernandez's book *Fresh Banana Leaves* frames the work that we have to do to ensure justice for all within our current social and political systems:

"This entire continent of North America and the rest of the Americas – Central America, South America, and the Caribbean – are Indigenous lands... For non-Indigenous peoples, becoming a welcomed guest is a life-long journey because they inherit the role of settlers. Settlers are those who are not Indigenous to the continents of the Americas, and to me, settlers do not include Black folks, who were forcefully taken from their ancestral homelands during slavery. This is the embodiment of how the United States was built. It was built on stolen lands and built by stolen indigenous peoples from the continent of Africa... Understanding one's positionality allows one to foster the type of relationship they have to work towards and the actions they have to take as either settlers or unwelcome or welcomed guests. Everyone must reflect on what role they play in this system that the United States was built on, settler colonialism. Settler colonialism is the systems that continue to grant settlers the power to lead political regimes, government institutions, and natural resource allocation over the Indigenous peoples who used to coexist with the lands that are now colonized. Settler colonialism favors settlers, and thus everyone must understand whether their positionality on Indigenous lands is that of a settler, and unwelcome guest, or a welcomed guest." (Hernandez, p3).

Let us not continue our trajectory of unequal determination. Let us work together to become welcomed guests and neighbors.