

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

Delilah O'hEidhin  
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**Re:** Support for LD 2007, An Act to Advance Self-determination for Wabanaki Nations

Sen. Carney, Rep. Moonen, and members of the Judiciary Committee, my name is Delilah O'hEidhin, and I live in Brooks. I am here to testify in support of LD 2007. I am a recent graduate from the University of Southern Maine with a Bachelor's in History.

I support LD 2007 and the Wabanaki Nation's right to self-determination and self-governance. It is time for the state of Maine to end the paternalist behavior that began with first the state of Massachusetts and continued in 1820 when Maine became a state. Through my research, I have seen a distinct pattern of paternalism enacted against the Wabanaki Nations despite the 1790 Non-Intercourse Act prohibiting states from entering into treaties without congressional approval. First Massachusetts and then Maine both continuously entered into treaties with the Penobscot and Passamaquoddy tribes. These treaties never approved by Congress were the basis for the Maine Indian Claims Settlement Acts. This behavior created a situation in which the Wabanaki Nations were reliant on the states of Massachusetts and Maine for access to their funds, which was frequently denied. The Maine Indian Claims Settlement Acts of 1980 gave the Wabanaki Nations some of their lands but still denied them their sovereignty, and their right to self-determination. The state of Maine has been told by its voters that there needs to be transparency in its constitution this past election and LD 2007 is a step in that direction.

According to The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, all Indigenous People have a right to self-determination, for Maine that means relinquishing control and allowing the Wabanaki Nations to have full control over their lands, money, and laws. For Maine, it means an end to over two hundred years of paternalist behavior and control over the Indigenous populations that were stewards of this land long before any European country came to these shores. America has taken their lands, their children, their religion, and their way of life. Maine has taken the Wabanaki Nations' land and kept them from embracing their traditional way of life. It is time to end this destructive behavior and allow the Wabanaki Nations their rights and privileges of self-determination and self-governance.

In conclusion, thank you for taking the time to read this testimony. Every other American has the right to self-determination and there should be no exception for the Wabanaki Nations. In Maine, we hear the saying "Maine the way life should be," well it is time to make that a reality for all Maine citizens including the Wabanaki Nations.

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