

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

From: Stephen Majercik, 15 Beech Dr., Brunswick, ME, 04011

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

Senator Carney, Representative Moonen, and members of the Judiciary Committee, my name is Stephen Majercik and I live in Brunswick. I have lived in Maine for all but six of the last 38 years. For the past 23 years, I was a faculty member in the Computer Science Department at Bowdoin College. I am now retired. I am writing to testify in support of **LD 2007**, *An Act to Advance Self-determination for Wabanaki Nations*.

LD 2007 is about many things. It's about the fact that, since 1989, the average income growth for Wabanaki citizens in Maine has been seven times less than the average income growth for tribal citizens outside of Maine. It's about the fact that, in 2019, the childhood poverty rate within Wabanaki communities was 3 to 5 times that of Maine's overall childhood poverty rate. It's about the fact that, for the last 40 years, the 1980 Maine Indians Settlement Act has prevented Maine tribes from enjoying the economic opportunities that new federal laws have afforded 570 other federal tribes. But, above all, it's about fairness. As a parent, as a teacher, and as a member of the Unitarian Universalist faith tradition, I regard fairness as one of the most important elements of a healthy and equitable relationship. Our treatment of the first Mainers has been deeply unfair and we need to fix that.

We like to say that Maine is the way life should be. That will not be the case until we act to eliminate the unfairness of the 1980 Maine Indians Settlement Act. I urge you to vote Ought to Pass on LD 2007 and work with your colleagues to pass this bill with a veto-proof majority.

Thank you for considering my testimony.