

Mary Beth DiMarco  
Houlton  
LD 2007

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

To: Sen. Carney, Rep. Moonen, and Members of the Judiciary Committee  
From Mary Beth DiMarco, 22 Washburn St, Houlton, Maine

Dear Senator Carney, Representative Moonen, and members of the Judiciary  
Committee, my name is Mary Beth DiMarco. I am a retired public school teacher  
living in Houlton. I am writing in favor of LD 2007.

Maine should recognize the Wabanaki nations' inherent right of self-determination in  
order for them to have access to the same rights and responsibilities as the 570  
federally recognized tribes in other parts of the United States. My Maliseet neighbors  
should enjoy the same relationship with federal Indian law as tribes who live in  
Minnesota or Wyoming and not be held back by an out-of-date agreement with the  
state of Maine.

A recent study of economic development shows that tribes in Maine lag far behind  
those in other states in terms of jobs and economic growth. It proves that barriers  
erected by the 1980 Maine Indian Claims Settlement Act are the cause. The study  
also shows that rural communities living near federally recognized tribes benefit from  
new job opportunities and goods and services generated by native businesses.

Advancing self-determination for the Wabanaki nations has the potential to lift up the  
area where I live and all of Maine.

The Wabanaki nations have used ecological practices to protect their territory from  
time immemorial to the present. It is time that we bring the state's relationship with  
them into the 21st century.

I urge you to vote in favor of LD 2007 and self-determination for the Wabanaki  
nations.

Thank you.

Mary Beth DiMarco