

Jeri Sides  
Cape Elizabeth  
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 Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary from Jeri Krogh Sides, PhD, 3 Gordon's Lane, Cape Elizabeth, Maine 04107.

Dear Senator Carney, Representative Moonen, and members of the judiciary committee, my name is Jeri Krogh Sides and I live in Cape Elizabeth. I am a retired clinical psychologist and I am writing in support of LD 2007.

In the name of equity, fairness and the right of self-determination for ALL people, including all tribal people in Maine, I urge you to support this bill. All Mainers highly value the extraordinary beauty and natural resources abundant in this state, and we are all aware that we owe a deep debt of gratitude to the Indigenous People of Maine who tended and honored these resources for countless generations, long long before European settlers. It is NOW TIME to repay that debt and allow the tribes of Maine to be free of those obstacles imposed on them by us!

We are also aware that the 1980 Claims Settlement Act is not only insufficient to reflect this gratitude, it inhibits it as it interferes with the Wabanaki Nations achieving the growth and development that is the birthright of all people. The success other tribes in other states have achieved since they have been able to take full advantage of self-determination policies at the federal level should be clear and convincing evidence that it is time to believe tribes have the capacity to make decisions in their own best interests and need to be free to do so.

Finally, it is increasingly clear to me that when one group of people is held back, all of us suffer. And conversely, when a group moves toward realizing their own potential, all people benefit. The Harvard Report makes clear that the entire state of Maine would be the beneficiaries if the tribal nations were allowed to flourish.

I urge you, as self-respecting honest people to respect the capacity for self-determination of all tribal people and pass this bill. NOW IS THE TIME-don't let it slip away.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jeri Krogh Sides