

Stacey Grass Akeley  
Yarmouth  
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: Stacey Grass Akeley, 424 Bayview St, Yarmouth, ME 04096

Dear Senator Carney, Representative Moonen, and members of the Judiciary Committee, my name is Stacey Grass Akeley and I live in Yarmouth. I am a retired RN, wife, daughter, mother, grandmother, and gardener. I am writing to testify in support of LD 2007.

Passing LD 2007 will put the tribes in Maine on equal footing with the 570 other federally-recognized tribes in every other state in the country — this is an issue of fairness and equity.

I am writing in support of the above statement as a mother and grandmother.

Economic restrictions imposed by the MICSAs have led to severe childhood poverty rates within the Wabanaki communities as compared to Maine's childhood poverty rates. This is fundamentally wrong on a human level. All children of Maine deserve the same chance to thrive and succeed, to not experience hunger or scarcity, to have a chance to learn and grow and achieve their goals and dreams.

I am also writing in support of Wabanaki Sovereignty as a concerned citizen of this planet. Since the Europeans arrived here, the stripping of natural resources led by the fossil fuel industry and encouraged by over consumerism has led to environmental destruction and climate disaster. The Wabanaki, as part of their heritage and birthright, have been protecting the environment and maintaining sustainable ecological practices for millennia and they need to be able to continue to do so. We all need to partner together to do so.

Committee members, as mothers, grandmothers, fathers and grandfathers, please consider that it is vital to remove barriers that have kept the Wabanaki children and all Wabanaki citizens from achieving the same economic growth as other federal tribes across the country. It is vitally important for our environment that they have the sovereign right and means to continue to protect our beautiful woods, waters, plant, and animal life. Thank you all for the consideration of these and other important issues relating to Wabanaki Sovereignty.