

Sally Tukey
Bath
LD 2007

To: Sen. Carney, Rep. Moonen, and members of the Judiciary Committee

From: Sally Tukey, 19 North Street, Bath, Me

Re: Support for LD 2007, an Act to Advance Self-determination for Wabanaki Nations.

My name is Sally Tukey and I live in Bath. I am submitting this written testimony in support of LD 2007, an Act to Advance Self-determination for Wabanaki Nations.

Though I live in the mid-coast area, I have always had a particular interest in downeast Maine. When I visit the area, I am always struck both by its beauty and its poverty. This is where my interest in the Wabanaki began. I attend Midcoast Monthly Meeting of Friends, where we are kept up to date on Wabanaki issues and I had a friend who participated in the project called the Gatherings. These connections strengthened my interest in the Wabanaki's drive for sovereignty.

I was appalled when I first learned Maine's tribes do not have the same sovereign power to control their own affairs as do all the other 570 federally registered tribes. Because of this inequality, which has lasted over 40 years, the Wabanaki have missed out on an economic boom that has benefited tribes in other parts of the country. Maine tribes lag far behind in the growth and development which would have created jobs and prosperity for the whole area, one of the poorest parts of our state. This is just not right and doesn't make sense.

I was moved by listening to the tribal chiefs who addressed the Legislature this year. They were all intelligent, articulate, and thoughtful leaders. It was clear to me that if the tribes are given the power to plan for themselves, they will use their traditions, culture, and lived experience to develop their land wisely. The culture of the Wabanaki will make them good stewards of the land as they move ahead with plans for growth and renewal. The Wabanaki will prosper and so will their neighbors.

I support LD 2007 because it will do away with the injustice the tribes have lived with for over 40 years, restore the dignity they deserve, and open a path to greater prosperity for the tribes and for a part of our state that badly needs development.

I would like to thank the members of the committee for reading my testimony and for the support many are showing for LD 2007.