

Lori Calderone  
Dover-Focroft  
LD 2007

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

Date: February 24, 2024

Re: LD 2007

I am Lori Calderone, a resident of Dover-Foxcroft, and I offer this testimony in support of LD 2007, an Act to Advance Self-Determination for Wabanaki Nations.

As I understand it, Wabanaki Nations have been excluded from the more than 150 federal programs enacted post the 1980 Maine Indian Claims Settlement Act.

Progress in equity, sovereignty, and criminal and civil justice issues, and literally the economic ability to care for children and elders have benefited all other tribal nations in the United States, but been denied to Wabanaki nations. This is nothing short of obscene and inhumane. It is a stain on Maine.

The average income growth since 1989 has been 61% for tribal citizens not located in Maine, but only 9% for Wabanaki citizens in Maine; Maine's overall income growth for the same period was 25%. Likewise, because of the Settlement Act, the Wabanaki tribes' health, educational and economic outcomes have lagged far behind those of other population groups in Maine and other tribes throughout the country.

The moral, ethical and just action to take now is to pass LD 2007; and by doing so, we will not only ensure a safer, healthier standard of living for Wabanaki nations, but also improve the economy in the rural areas where the Wabanai live.

I could site statistics and reports, but, you know, honestly, I just have never understood why Maine has held the Wabanaki back. Why? Even if it were not in the economic benefit of other Mainers, Maine should still ensure that Wabanaki nations enjoy the same federal benefits as the other 570 Native American tribes. It is the right thing to do. Pass LD 2007.

Lori Calderone  
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