

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: Barbara Vickery, 56 Iceboro Road, Richmond

Dear Senator Carney, Representative Moonen, and members of the Judiciary Committee, my name is Barbara Vickery and I live in Richmond. I am a retired conservation biologist. I am writing to testify in support of LD 2007.

I spent my professional career and now my retirement volunteer efforts focused on conserving Maine's exceptional forests and waters. But these forests and waters are here now largely because the Wabanaki people were caring for and sustaining them for thousands of years before we settled here. They understand and hold highest respect for what we now call sustainable ecological practices. This has been and remains their heritage. So I know we can trust them to manage their trust lands and develop economic opportunities for their people, both. But they can only do that effectively if they have full sovereignty and self-determination. This is made clear by looking at the difference between the recent impressive progress made by tribes all across the country who have full self-determination rights, as contrasted with the Wabanaki tribes who continue to be held back by Maine's discriminatory restraints on their full self-governance. It is time to make this right and allow them to self-govern in the ways that all other 570 tribes in the country do. It is their right.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my concerns

Sincerely,

Barbara Vickery