



February 23, 2024

Senator Carney, Representative Moonen and members of the Joint Standing Committee on the Judiciary

I write today in SUPPORT OF LD 2007, *An Act to Advance Self-determination for Wabanaki Nations*. My name is Connie Adler, MD of Chesterville, ME. I am a physician and Board Chair of Grandmothers for Reproductive Rights, an organization committed to maximizing the rights, quality of life, and accessible choices of all families and all children.

The Wabanaki Peoples deserve the same sovereign powers as federally recognized tribes everywhere else in the country possess. Self-governance is a democratic principle for all Americans and definitely should not exclude the original inhabitants and stewards of these lands.

Additionally, research clearly shows that tribal sovereignty means improved outcomes in health, education and economic strength. Gains made in other tribes have eluded the Maine tribes due to restraints put upon them by the state government. The health statistics for the people of Wabanaki nations have been intolerable for many years. Life expectancy, maternal mortality, infant mortality - all have worsened. It is unconscionable to withhold from tribal governments the tools that they could use to improve conditions for their citizens.

I urge you to vote “ought to pass” on LD 2007 so that the children and families of the Wabanaki Nations may have better health, education and income, and their communities may flourish.

Respectfully submitted,

Connie Adler, MD
Chesterville, ME