

Sylvie Fenderson  
Bruswick  
LD 2007

Esteemed members of the committee,

I am writing to express my wholehearted support of LD 2007 An Act to Advance Self-determination for Wabanaki Nations. I am a lifelong resident of the state of Maine who can trace my ancestry back to some of the first European colonizers here. I am so grateful that I have had the chance to learn about Wabanaki history and I deeply honor the Wabanaki people as the original inhabitants of this beautiful land. I know that the flourishing of indigenous communities today is not only inherently right but especially imperative for the reconciliation of centuries of violence and ongoing denial by the state. There are many reasons to support this bill but for me, it comes down to this most simple fact: After centuries of broken trust, broken treaties, and direct and indirect state violence against the tribes, re-affirming Wabanaki rights to self-determination in Maine law is the right thing to do. I am 24 years old and the state of Maine I am building towards is one where neighbors truly look out for one another in the way I know that we can. This means not looking away from the truth of past harms but facing them, taking action towards addressing current disparities, and healing together. Please take us a step in that direction and support LD 2007.