Brahn Smith
Connor Township
LD 2195

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: Brahn Smith, 826 West Gate Rd. Connor Twp. ME

Dear Senator Carney, Representative Moonen, and members of the Judiciary Committee, my name is Brahn Smith and I live in Connor Township. I am an illustrator and photographer who loves Maine's nature and endearing spirit. I am writing to testify in support of LD 2007.

The federal government has long since recognized that tribes can and should be allowed to self govern, and I see no reason why Maine should not follow these federal laws. But most importantly, I see every reason that self governing is deeply owed to the people of the Wabanaki Nations. They are their own people, and always have been. They have their own believes, rules, culture, etc. We should have never taken over the governing role of their people to begin with, and we can not continue this way. This is a holdover of old, incorrect, and morally repugnant colonization behaviors. The fact that the Settlement Act made it a process of buying back their own land, alone, is grossly inappropriate. But the fact that it was made with major oversight and confining terms of white settlers over the Wabanaki Nations is morally wrong, and should be considered legally incorrect.
Additionally, the delay in protections and federal laws made to benefit all tribes here in America is horrific and clearly detrimental to the Wabanaki Nations. They deserve to benefit from the passing of these laws, just as anyone in America should.

I thank the committee members for their time and consideration in this complex but serious matter. I believe we owe much more than this to the Wabanaki Nations, and we long past due to get started on giving back to them what is rightfully theirs. Giving them self governance is a very good first step, and will help them proceed as the intelligent and able nation that they are.