

Dear Senator Carney, Representative Moonen, and members of the Judiciary Committee,

I am writing to share my support for LD 2007, an Act to Advance Self-determination for Wabanaki Nations. As a minister in Biddeford Pool, I am aware that we live and work on land that was formerly held by the Wabanaki Peoples and that we have a sacred duty to respect the right to self-determination for the people who cared for this land for generations.

As many of you in the Judiciary and Legislature are aware, the unintended consequences of Maine's 1980 Maine Indian Claims Settlement Act (MICSA) are grave and unjust. Unlike the other 570 federal tribes in the US, Wabanaki Nations have been prevented from achieving significant economic growth, because they have not had full access to federal policies of self-determination.

We need your help to remove these obstacles, to help the Wabanaki Nations take advantage of federal self-determination policies, programs, and funding that every tribe outside of Maine has had access to.

I am writing to ask that you please consider closely the importance of this legislation and what it means to the people of the Wabanaki Nations, our brothers and sisters in this state and throughout New England and Canada. We are asking you to please help reverse the unintended injustice that has cost Maine tribes thousands of jobs and hundreds of millions of dollars in goods and services.

In closing, I thank you for reading my testimony, and for considering the passage of LD 2007. Restoration matters across the board, and restoring tribal self-governance matters deeply.

Thank you,

Rev. Paula Norbert

Pastor, Union Church

Biddeford Pool, Maine

Resident, Kennebunk