



SIERRA CLUB

MAINE CHAPTER

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To: Committee on Judiciary
From: Ania Wright, Legislative & Political Specialist, Sierra Club Maine
Date: February 26, 2024
Re: Testimony in Support of **LD 2007: An Act to Advance Self-determination for Wabanaki Nations**

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

I am submitting the following testimony on behalf of Sierra Club Maine, representing over 22,000 supporters and members statewide. Founded in 1892, Sierra Club is one of our nation's oldest and largest environmental organizations. We work diligently to amplify the power of our 3.8 million members nationwide as we work towards combating climate change and promoting a just and sustainable economy. We urge the Committee to vote 'ought to pass' on LD 2007.

The committee will undoubtedly hear a breadth of information on the legal, political, and economic results of passing LD 2007 today. To that end, Sierra Club Maine has chosen to center our testimony on the environmental justice implications of the legislation.

LD 2007 is centered on righting a historical wrong and is intended to establish fairness and equity for the Wabanaki people by conferring on them the rights of every other recognized tribe in this country. Restoring Wabanaki people's right to self-determination will preserve and protect the environmental stewardship that Wabanaki have led for millenia, long before European settlement of what we now call Maine.

Globally, indigenous peoples comprise only 6% of the global population, but are responsible for protecting 80% of the world's biodiversity¹. The Sierra Club, which is committed to our legacy of safeguarding lands, water and wildlife for all as we work to permanently protect 30% of our lands and waters by 2030, sees LD 2007 as a critical step for conservation and natural resource protection. To that end, we hope that this or future legislation will expand Wabanaki territory and sovereignty regarding water quality protection capability.

Nationally, the Sierra Club is committed to actively promoting and advocating for the rights of Indigenous peoples, supporting their efforts for Free Prior Informed Consent (FPIC), honoring Treaty rights regarding land and water, increasing access on federal lands for cultural practices and gathering, protecting sacred sites on federal lands, and building

¹ <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/indigenouspeoples>

power for Tribal partners at the grassroots and all levels of government. The exploitation of lands goes hand in hand with the exploitation of people.

We oppose efforts to dispossess Indigenous peoples of their lands, their cultures, and their right to self-determination. We support Native Peoples' wielding sovereign powers to protect the environment and to establish environmental justice.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Please vote 'ought to pass' on LD 2007.

Sincerely,

Ania Wright
Legislative and Political Specialist
Sierra Club Maine