

Nell Houde
Portland
LD 2007

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: Nell Houde, 18 Anderson St. Apt. 2 Portland, ME

Dear Senator Carney, Representative Moonen, and members of the Judiciary
Committee, my name is Nell Houde and I live in Portland Maine. I am an educator, a
farmer, and an involved community member. I do land-based work in this place we
now call Maine, and I am writing to testify in support of LD 2007.

The Wabanaki Nations have been enacting resistance and resilience for over 400
years of contact with settlers in this place we now call Maine. This land is theirs. It is
the responsibility of the settler government of Maine to rightfully recognize the
Wabanaki Nations as the sovereign nations that they are, and cease blocking their
right to self-governance.

The passing of LD 2007 would ensure the start of a future that is different from the
harmful relationship of the past between the Wabanaki Nations and the State of
Maine. In continuing to block Wabanaki Sovereignty, the State of Maine has left the
Wabanaki Nations in economic stagnation and decline. This is yet another way the
State of Maine is enacting unreasonable control over the citizens of the Wabanaki
Nations.

My understanding of the necessity of this bill has increased over the last few years of
doing land-based education work in this place we now call Maine. Wabanaki
stewardship of these lands is directly responsible for the diversity and abundance of
life in this place. We, all people who are living on these lands, are in such a dire
situation environmentally because of the dispossession of Wabanaki people from their
ancestral lands, and the replacement of an Indigenous relationship of respect and
responsibility with a settler relationship of extraction and harm. As someone who
wants to see these lands and all the beings who live on these lands prosper in
interconnected safety, I know the first step towards that future is the return of
Wabanaki care and management to these lands, and that is possible through returning
sovereignty to the Wabanaki Nations.

Passing LD 2007 is beyond necessary, and the time is now. We owe it to the people of
the Wabanaki Nations and the non-native citizens of Maine. When Wabanaki people
are able to thrive and enact self-determination in their ancestral homelands, we are all
able to thrive.

Thank you all for your time and consideration. It is urgent we pass LD 2007 for
Wabanaki sovereignty and self determination, and I urge you to take this
responsibility to return justice to the Wabanaki people to heart.