

## 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:** Jeanne Hathaway, 213 Pemaquid Harbor Road, Pemaquid, ME 04558

Dear Senator Carney, Representative Moonen, and members of the Judiciary Committee, my name is Jeanne Hathaway and I live in Pemaquid, ME. I am a retired marketing and communications professional with Native American ancestry. I am writing to testify in support of LD 2007.

In my long life, living in many states, I have witnessed countless acts of both aggression and neglect against Native peoples. But none quite as senseless and economically damaging as the restrictions imposed on the Wabanaki Nations by the *1980 Maine Indian Claims Settlement Act (MISCA)*.

The practical effect of MISCA has been to deny the Wabanaki (as well as their neighbors in rural Maine) the same economic benefits experienced by other federally recognized tribes throughout the United States.

Easing the Settlement Act's restrictions will enable the Wabanaki Nations to take full advantage of federal self-determination policies that benefit 570 other tribes and their neighboring communities across the country. The average income growth since 1989 has been 61% for tribal citizens not located in Maine, but **only 9%** for Wabanaki citizens in Maine; Maine's overall income growth for the same period was 25%. Because of MISCA, the Wabanaki tribes' health, educational and economic outcomes have lagged far behind those of other population groups in Maine and other tribes throughout the country.

This is inexcusable. It serves no one's best interest except for a short-sighted, greedy few who might profit from opportunities that rightfully should be the Wabanakis'.

Passing LD 2007 is the right, moral and economically responsible thing to do. And it is long overdue.