

Joan Beal
Norway
LD 2007

Dear Senator Carney, Representative Moonen, and members of the Judiciary Committee, my name is Joan Beal and I live in Norway.

I am writing in support of LD 2007 and urge you to bring the bill to the legislature. The Land Claims Implementing Act has never worked well for the tribes in Maine and we have witnessed the injustices of the Wabanaki exclusion from Federal legislation that benefit every other tribe in our country. The bipartisan committee which investigated this, found this to be true as well. It is not a partisan issue.

It is time that we reckon with our past. I have, in the past, been a foster parent to Penobscot and MicMac children, not realizing, at the time, how the full history of their people led to their separation from their tribe and culture. This is a small but significant thread in the overall story of the Wabanaki people. We must pay the debts of past unfairnesses, and voting to affirm the tribal sovereignty which is inherently theirs, is the most significant way to do this.

I thank you for your work on this important bill and for the perseverance of all who have worked toward resolving this issue. I stand with the Wabanaki people in continuing this effort.