

Heather Fogg  
Hope  
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: Heather Fogg, 12 Chickadee Lane, Hope, ME 04847

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

My name is Heather and I live in Hope. I am a fellow human, community member, neighbor, psychologist, conflict engagement specialist, mediator, and restorative practitioner. I am writing today to testify in support of LD 2007.

I have long seen the effects of rules jointly made or agreed upon, yet drafted in language that obscures as much as it clarifies, facing interpretation and implementation challenges. When the favorable interpretation of those decisions is given most to those who hold greater influence and power, and when those most directly impacted by the decisions of others are calling for change, we must listen to one another and heed all concerns.

I worked in the courts for 9 years in Maryland, helping folks to find their way to clarity and consensus based decisions that met as many needs as possible through stating agreements and their repercussions as plainly as possible. I witnessed the possibility of finding joint solutions to pressing problems when we recognized one another's inherent right and capacity to make decisions and enact agreements that support us all to live in ways that meet our values, our ways of life, and our basic human need to belong and be treated with dignity and respect.

That is why I am in support of LD 2007 - restoring the full rights of the Wabanaki Nation to make and implement their own decisions about their way of life. Prior efforts to find common ground and clearly articulated resolutions have led to this moment in history now, and it's up to us to live into our shared humanity and show each other our care and concern for one another's well-being. LD 2007 gives those decisions and voices to the peoples from whom it has been taken for far too long.

Thank you for supporting LD 2007. I want to call myself part of a place and a people who honor one another, who can call each other neighbor and friend, and your support of LD 2007 is another step in that most needed direction now.