

Margaret Williams
Topsham
LD 2007

Dear Senator Carney, Representative Moonen, and members of the Judiciary Committee, my name is Margaret Williams and I live in Topsham. I am writing to testify in support of LD 2007.

The changes laid out in LD 2007 are necessary and overdue improvements to existing law regarding Maine's tribes that would benefit all Maine people. The Maine Settlement Acts were meant to be continually reviewed and revised by The Maine Indian Tribal-State Commission, and they have found that the Acts have created the conditions for an inhumane level economic disparity between tribal people and the rest of Maine. The Wabanaki tribes' health, educational and economic outcomes have lagged far behind those of other population groups in Maine and across Indian country.

As a sixth generation Mainer and descendent of people who made their livelihood from the forests of the Downeast region, my own family's prosperity rose as Penobscot, Passamaquoddy, Maliseet, and Mi'kmaq land was taken and degraded. Now these areas, which used to be booming with activity, could be economic hubs if LD 2007 was passed. A Harvard study found that self-government for the tribes would likely mean an additional \$330 million a year in Maine's Gross Domestic Product, more than 2,700 jobs, and \$39 million a year in state and local tax revenue.

Please do the right thing and update these long-overdue laws. Thank you,
Margaret Williams