

Joanne McDonald  
Norway  
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: (Joanne McDonald, 18 Pleasant St., Norway ME 04268  
Member of First Universalist Church of Norway

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

My name is Joanne McDonald and I live in Norway. I am a retired professional from  
Human Services fields (disability services, public assistance and healthcare). I am  
writing to testify in support of LD 2007.

There are many reasons that I support Tribal Sovereignty for the Wabanaki Nations  
including economic growth for members of the Wabanaki nations and all citizens of  
rural Maine, commitment to addressing ecological issues and support of inclusion of  
all people who are members of disenfranchised communities. A major concern for  
me is the children. As the parent of a son who has had a lifelong mental illness, I was  
fortunate enough to have enough resources to provide the many (often costly) extra  
supports that my son needed to survive the complicated systems that are in place for  
people with disabilities. He is currently able to work part time and is a contributing  
member of the community. I have always had concerns for the children and families  
who do not have sufficient financial means to address needs at an early age when  
interventions are so important. With more than 40% of children in the Wabanaki  
Nations living in poverty, and with poverty itself a major factor in presenting  
obstacles to young people's overall health and mental health, legislation that will  
foster the ability of the Nations to generate a better economy will be a huge help in  
addressing important needs. I urge you to support LD 2007.

Thank you for your attention and for your consideration of supporting the health and  
mental health of children from the Wabanaki nations.

Sincerely,

Joanne McDonald

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