

Theodore Kanellakis
Camden
LD 2007

Esteemed members of the Judiciary Committee. My name is Theodore Kanellakis. I am a full-time resident and homeowner in Camden, Penobscot territory. By way of introduction, I am a retired Police Lieutenant from New York City. I am also a retired and still active, Episcopal Priest. I am a member of the Episcopal Diocese of Maine's Committee on Indian Relations and have served for over 15 years. In that time I have come to know and share friendship with many Wabanaki Tribal leaders and Tribal members. I come before you speaking for myself.

I want to gratefully recognize and honor both your importance and privilege as elected legislators. I wish also in the most respectful way, to remind you of your responsibility to yourselves, your families and loved ones, to all of us you have promised to represent, not the least of which are the peoples who have honored this place we call Maine, and who for more than 10,000 years before us, have continued to be steadfast in their devotion to this territory, honoring their ancestors before them, adhering to the sacred premise that all is gift from the Creator, to share in every responsible way with one another, selflessly for our mutual benefits.

Before us, they inherited all we have come to know, care about, and they have been good stewards. Yet they have been disrespected and mistreated, usurped of land, water, natural resources and territory, systematically deceived, and commodified by visiting peoples. We only are aware of some of the horrors, purposely kept hidden by silence and private conspiratorial conversations and plans made to deny and oppress our neighbors, our Wabanaki neighbors.

So I come before you as one with others similarly moved, and hopeful, that finally, now and in this Legislature, with your dignified use of power, we can together experience an end to the tragedy we know in our beings. It is time to put an end to self-serving tactics and offer a new path, one developed and embraced by a Joint Task Force of fellow Legislators and Tribal Leaders who agreed and put forth the strong and good foundations of what is now LD 2007, the Bill before you for you supporting vote for passage, so the Wabanaki, our neighbors can see their way to Self-Determination, in the dawning light which takes away fear and give us the vision and promise of a new day. Thank you, and God Bless us all. TK+