

Christopher Cayer
Stratton
LD 2007

Testimony in support of LD 2007, An Act to Advance Self-determination for Wabanaki Nations

Dear Senator Carney, Representative Moonen, and members of the Judiciary Committee, my name is Chris Cayer and I live in Stratton. I am a political consultant and campaign manager by trade. I am writing to testify in support of LD 2007.

LD 2007 is the latest attempt to restore Wabanki sovereignty in the state of Maine. I've been following this issue for a few years and I have watched as the Wabanki people have worked tirelessly to further this cause. The tribes of Maine are asking to be treated the same as all of the other federally recognized tribes in the United States.

The state of Maine has a paternal relationship with the Indigenous tribes in this state. This relationship is unlike any other in the nation. The tribes are currently unable to benefit from the federal laws that are intended to provide aid. This is a result of the highly disputed 1980s Land Settlement Act.

The Wabanki people have been stewards of this land since long before Europeans landed in the Americas. We decimated their people, stole their land, and put their children into boarding schools. Our history with the Wabanki people is shameful.

If we want to move forward and live in harmony with our Wabanki neighbors, we need to acknowledge our difficult history. We need to take steps to correct the past. This starts with restoring their sovereignty.

Thank you for reviewing my message and for your good work in the Maine legislature.