

To: Sen. Carney, Rep. Moonen, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on the Judiciary
From: Mary-Therese Duffy, 157 Valley Rd. Raymond, ME 04071

Re: LD 2007, An Act to Advance Self-determination for Wabanaki Nations

It is abundantly clear that it is well past time to fully correct the State of Maine's relationship to the Wabanaki Nations within their own territory. As recognized by the Federal Government, the Wabanaki are entitled to the rights of self governance within these, their tribal lands. This includes the regulation of fishing, hunting, other uses of natural resources, access to clean water, gaming, taxation, the prosecution of crimes, and long overdue promises re land acquisition.

We are extraordinarily gifted to be neighbors to the Wabanaki people. By way of their ancient and continued relationship to the lands and waters here, they foster perceptions and understandings that nourish and protect ecosystems, the economy and communities. Their knowledge and ways of being reach deeply into and expand wisdom in every aspect of living in this territory, be it in the sciences, the arts, the humanities, or social strengths. Their expertise has always been direly needed, but perhaps as never before, as Maine faces its own crises of climate change and human migration. It is simply imperative to Maine that the Wabanaki live as who they are without outside interference and impediment, and LD 2007 provides these means.

I believe this is the third letter of support for Wabanaki Sovereignty I have written. Today, I cannot help but be reminded of the 22 recommendations released in January of 2020 by a bi-partisan task force of Tribal Leaders, State Officials and Legislators. The research and proposals of these dedicated people were studied and debated at length, with not one frivolous word or proposal. It was just simply jaw dropping that they were not adopted. Frankly, it is an embarrassment. To continue a relationship of domination and denial of Wabanaki rights of sovereignty excludes them from over 150 Federal laws and leaves them subject to treatment as municipality members, perpetuating longstanding and reprehensible harms that not one of us, should be content to let stand.

Please, support the health and well-being of the Wabanaki people through determining LD 2007 as 'ought to pass' and recognizing their sovereignty. It will only serve to enhance the health and well being of the entire State of Maine.

Thank you for your time,

Mary-Therese Duffy
Raymond, ME

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LD 2007

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