

To: Sen. Carney, Rep. Moonen, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary. My name is Judy Netherland, I live in Hollis Center. Today I offer my testimony in support of LD 2007, An Act to Advance Self-Determination for Wabanaki Nation.

The restrictions imposed on Maine's Native American tribes, because of the 1980 Maine Indian Claims Settlement Act (MICSA), are prohibiting Maine's Native American tribes, the Wabanaki Nations, from being able to experience the same self-determination that all federally recognized tribes are currently experiencing. This prohibits their ability to participate in the same economic benefits that other tribes that are federally recognized are benefitting from.

Allowing the Wabanaki Nation the right to self-determination and the economic benefits that will follow will only boost this state's revenue. Self-determination will allow for many tribal members to be employed or better employed. This will help prevent them from having to experience poverty levels, which are currently high in the Wabanaki Nations.

Self-determination is working to help other states. According to Molly Young of The Oklahoman, "Oklahoma tribal nations employed more than 50,000 people, paid nearly \$2.5 billion in wages and benefits and spent more than \$300 million on roads and construction projects in 2019." Tribal owned businesses are revenue streams for tribal communities, the communities and states they live in and provide essential goods and services. They employ tribal members and non-tribal members. They also provide tribal members with the ability to take care of themselves in the same manner that the approximate 574 other tribes that are currently federally recognized are able to do. It's the self-determination that they deserve to have.

It is a misconception that the only source of revenue for tribal members is gambling. In fact, many of the other federally recognized tribes are successfully participating in government contracting, construction, manufacturing, material sourcing and other professional services. Young members of Wabanaki Nation will have access to job training, better jobs to provide for themselves and their families, better health care and they will have the opportunity to help in the greater mission of self-determination that tribal members deserve.

The people of the Wabanaki Nations deserve to have the same opportunities as other tribes that are federally recognized. To participate in the same federal benefits and services as well as the same level of protection received because of this great relationship with the United States government that comes with being federally recognized. Maine is a leader in legislative action that benefits its people and yet we still have not provided self-determination to the Wabanaki Nations. Something that is intrinsically theirs and yet is being withheld from them in this great state. I ask you to please correct this and vote to pass LD 2007.

Thank you,

Judy Netherland