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LD 247

Hello-

I am Michelle Violette Resident, Windham, ME 04062.

I cannot fathom opposition to LD247 "as recognizing that historical reality and in some small but meaningful way having Maine State Government acknowledge the Wabanaki connection to creation, in this context state-owned parks or historic sites managed by the State. Honoring the Wabanaki connection to creation, to all of the Wabanaki's relations, signifies Maine State Government's respect for the Wabanaki worldview and the unique connection that the Wabanaki have to this place called Maine.

The displacement of Wabanaki Peoples and theft of Wabanaki land involves far more than an economic loss. It separated the Wabanaki from what they view as their relations, all of creation, with a duty to defend and to protect it." LD 247 "represents an aspect of the growing land

back movement to recognize the Wabanaki connection to the land and for settler governments and institutions to take meaningful steps to restore Wabanaki access and stewardship to traditional Wabanaki territory.

The State of Maine would not be the first settler government in the United States to take the step of providing free Indigenous access to public parks.

Indigenous people have enjoyed free access to National Parks by showing their tribal ID." "Minnesota passed a law

granting to the citizens of the 11 federally recognized tribal nations residing within the boundary of that state free access to its state parks.

The State of Maine owes much to the Wabanaki. Passage of " LD 247 "would represent another discrete but important step in acknowledging Wabanaki Peoples as the Original Peoples of this land."

I encourage the members of the State and Local Government Committee to pass LD247.

The quoted text is from Testimony of John Dieffenbacher- representing the Wabanaki Alliance in support of LD 25 An Act to Provide Indigenous Peoples Free Access to State Parks

Presented for the Public Hearing Before the Maine Legislature's Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry
January 25, 2023.

I reproduce it here for it best expresses my views and bears repeating.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

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