

Andrea Daggett  
Bar Harbor  
LD 14

Dear Senator Talbot Ross, Representative Pluecker, and members of the Committee on Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry,

My name is Andrea Daggett. I currently go to school in Bar Harbor and I am writing in strong support of LD 14: An Act to Provide Indigenous People Free Access to State Parks. I am choosing to support this bill because I believe it represents an important beginning in concretely acknowledging the Wabankai tribes. The relationship between the state of Maine and its tribes has historically been gruesome. Passing this bill would be a step in the correct direction in respecting the Wabanaki people and their rightful ability to exist on their own land that Maine settlers stole from them.

The land that has been turned into State Parks has always been sacred to the Wabanaki peoples however once it was turned into a park with fences, property lines, and now a fee to enter the lands certainly sent a message to the tribes. Unfortunately we know these messages of colonization did not simply end with State Parks. The settlers in Maine inflicted generational trauma on its native people with the goal of erasing native culture.

By no means will this bill resolve the effect that Maine has had on its native people but if it passes it will acknowledge the history and reason as to why they have had to pay to gain access to their own lands. This disruption between the people and the land is not strictly a physical one because so much of cultural identities for native peoples are rooted in the spiritual connection to the land. So by restricting land access Maine is restricting the identities of the Wabanaki tribes. Furthermore the State Parks in Maine are on sacred lands that are important for native people to exercise their spiritual practices and traditions. So now we as Maine residents have the choice to help repair this relationship between the Wabanaki people and their land, showing that Mainers want to see the restoration of the relationship between native people and their land through rightful land access. I urge you to pass LD 14 and lead Maine to step in the right direction and to show respect to the Wabanaki tribes.