

Elizabeth Peters  
Winthrop  
LD 14

Good afternoon and thank you for this opportunity to testify as to the importance of passing LD 14. I am a registered native member of the Aroostook Band of Mic Mac. I feel that the passage of this bill will help to repair the relationship of the government with its indigenous people by giving them free access to lands that were once theirs historically. In addition, it is no secret that the first people to inhabit this state lived in concordance with the land and its wild inhabitants, taking only what was needed and giving back in ceremony, care, and offering. Native people are the best caretakers of the lands, and freer access to state parks would allow those who wish to continue to improve these lands and waterways the ability to continue their mission of stewardship. Personally, when I go to a state park or other public space, I plan on the fact that I will be picking up trash and hauling it out, as there is always plenty to be found. I always bring a bag with me for this purpose. The carry-in, carry-out motto is nice, but most people coming from other areas don't adhere to this policy. This is evidenced by the full bags of garbage I regularly remove from state parks and public lands. The only thing preventing myself and others from doing this more often is the cost of entry. By passing LD14 you will be gaining people who have the best interests of their ancestral lands in heart and mind. Having caring, watchful eyes upon our public lands will benefit all people in this state.