



FRIENDS OF BAXTER STATE PARK

Friends of Baxter State Park

Testimony on LD 14

An Act to Provide Indigenous Peoples Free Access to State Parks

March 11, 2025

Friends of Baxter State Park strongly supports LD 14. This bill makes sense on many levels. Charging Wabanaki people admission to state parks in Maine is akin to charging someone to walk across their own front yard. We believe this is a small but meaningful way for the State of Maine to acknowledge the Wabanaki connection to their homelands, and to move toward reconciliation and healing.

We would also like to note that Baxter State Park has been providing free day use access for all Maine people – Wabanaki and non-Wabanaki alike – for many decades, and free access for everyone at Togue Beach. Thus, the Park is already following both the letter and the spirit of LD 14. For many years, Park staff have gone a step further and offered Wabanaki people from other states and Canadian provinces free admission as well.

Friends of Baxter State Park urges the Committee on Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry to vote ought to pass on this bill.