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LD 958

I urge you to support LD 958, an Act to Prohibit Eminent Domain on Tribal Lands, submitted by Rep. Faulkingham.

LD 958 is a step towards justice and fairness for the sovereign citizens of the tribes. The Wabanaki Nations should not be treated differently from other federally recognized tribes. If a project could truly benefit the public, the state, and the tribes, the state should work with tribal leaders to find a solution. This legislation is a protective measure to guarantee consultation and mutual agreement before any action is taken on tribal lands. It ensures the tribes have a voice.

Taking tribal land without consultation is against federal policy. Federal law protects most tribal nations from state-level eminent domain, but the 1980 Settlement Acts have resulted in the Wabanaki Nations in Maine being unfairly excluded from these federal protections.

History shows the harm of eminent domain on Wabanaki lands. Maine Route 190, which cuts through the heart of the Passamaquoddy Reservation at Sipayik, was taken by eminent domain in 1925—a decision made without tribal input. LD 958 would ensure that no such action happens again without tribal consultation.

The State of Maine should forever restrain itself from constraining the sovereignty of the original stewards of our shared lands; LD 958 works towards that better future for all.