

Joey LeBlanc
Eddington
LD 958

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and the Committee On Judiciary, my name is Joey LeBlanc and I live in Eddington. I am testifying in support of LD 958, An Act to Prohibit Eminent Domain on Tribal Lands. I am very proud to be from the state of Maine but not when it comes to issues of tribal sovereignty – we lag shamefully behind the rest of the nation. Our Wabanaki neighbors and friends deserve the right to input on the use of their own lands. This bill promotes collaborative efforts and involves important steps towards a strong, fair relationship between Maine and the Wabanaki Alliance, putting us on track with other federally recognized tribal relations in other states and to mitigate more of the harm of the 1980 Maine Indian Claims Settlement Implementing Act. This change would put us back in line with existent federal policy. I truly believe we must do everything in our power as a state to work towards true tribal sovereignty, for Wabanaki people to access the human rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, as well as for the sake of Maine people. When we all are supported in making decisions that affect us and in working together in caring for our lands, we can only thrive together. Please vote in support of LD 958 to restore fundamental rights to the Wabanaki nations and prohibit eminent domain bypassing tribal input. Thank you very much for your time.