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Freeport
LD 958

I respectfully urge each of you to Pass LD 958, the Act to Prohibit Eminent Domain on Tribal Lands. The state must work respectfully with tribal leaders when development projects are under consideration. This legislation is a protective measure to guarantee consultation and mutual agreement before any action is taken on tribal lands. It recognizes the inherent sovereignty of the Wabanaki Nations, honors their intrinsic relationship with the lands and waters as well as their wisdom of that which is in the collective interest to maintain Wabanaki cultural, economic, and social foundations.

Passage of LD 958 is but one step towards justice and fairness, which have been significantly absent during the centuries of colonization and ongoing systemic racial inequities. The Wabanaki Nations should have the same status, rights, and opportunities of other federally recognized tribes. This bill ensures fairness, respects sovereignty, and prevents future injustices, providing a seat at the decision-making table, in particular with regard to stewardship of collective resources. LD 958 restores a fundamental principle that the Wabanaki Nations are sovereign governments with inherent eminence to regulate their territories. Let us do the work of constructing right relations.