



April 3, 2025

Written Testimony in Support of LD 958 - An Act to Prohibit Eminent Domain on Tribal Lands

Sen. Carney and Rep. Kuhn:

The mission of the Maine Appalachian Trail Land Trust (MATLT) is to preserve and protect land surrounding the Appalachian Trail in Maine for public benefit. Tribal sovereignty is an issue that also impacts land conservation, as ensuring that the Wabanaki Nations are able to steward and care for lands helps all Mainers and ensures fairness, respects sovereignty, and prevents future injustices.

The Maine Appalachian Trail Land Trust supports the passage of LD 958 which amends the 1980 Act to Implement the Maine Indian Claims Settlement to prevent the state from seizing Wabanaki Nations' land for public uses. This is a protection already afforded to almost all other federally recognized tribes, and 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. Past decisions regarding eminent domain on Wabanaki lands were made without tribal input - this legislation is a protective measure to guarantee consultation and mutual agreement before any action is taken on tribal lands. The Maine Appalachian Trail Land Trust is proud to support passage of LD 958.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Simon Rucker".

Simon Rucker
Executive Director