

Kerry Read
Paris
LD 958

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and members of the Judiciary Committee, I am writing in support of LD 958 as a citizen of Maine, and a member of the Maine Unitarian Universalist State Advocacy Network and member of the Wabanaki Alliance Coalition, a group of over 300 faith-based and community partners working across the State of Maine to promote Wabanaki sovereignty and tribal well-being. Unitarian Universalist's first principle is the recognition of the inherent worth and dignity of every person. I am compelled by my faith and my heart to advocate for fairness and justice. I believe that the state of Maine has a moral and legal obligation to recognize the sovereignty of the federally recognized Wabanaki Nations.

The 1980 Settlement Acts have perpetrated much ongoing harm to the Wabanaki Nations and surrounding communities. Federal law protects most tribal nations from state-level eminent domain, but the Settlement Acts have unfairly excluded the Wabanaki Nations from these federal protections.

No one should have their land taken without consultation or agreement. This law would guarantee that the tribes voice is heard and any future action taken on tribal land is only by mutual consent.

This bill is one step toward preventing future harms to the Wabanaki Nations by restoring the fundamental principle that the Wabanaki Nations are sovereign governments with inherent power to regulate their territories.

I urge you to vote "ought to pass" on LD 958