

Madeleine Weatherhead
Portland, Maine
LD 958

Dear Members of the Judiciary Committee,

My name is Madeleine Weatherhead and I live in Portland, Maine. I'm writing to support LD 958, An Act to Prohibit Eminent Domain on Tribal Lands.

This bill is an important step towards justice and fairness. No one should have their land taken without consultation or agreement. LD 958 removes the state of Maine's power to take Wabanaki Nations' tribal land through eminent domain. 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.

This bill encourages collaboration, not conflict. 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 an important protective measure to guarantee consultation and mutual agreement before any action is taken on tribal lands. It ensures the tribes have a voice.

The Wabanaki Nations should not be treated differently from other federally recognized tribes. This bill ensures fairness, respects sovereignty, and prevents future injustices. LD 958 restores a fundamental principle that the Wabanaki Nations are sovereign governments with inherent power to regulate their territories.

I urge you to support this important step towards fairness for the Wabanaki Nations and their ability to have decision-making power over their land.

Sincerely,

Madeleine Weatherhead