

Elizabeth Charles McGough
Gardiner
LD 958

To the members of the Committee on Judiciary, thank you for reviewing my testimony. I write in support of LD 958: An Act to Prohibit Eminent Domain on Tribal Lands. It is time for us move in a direction of justice to correct the course of a long history of violations against Wabanaki Nations and their lands. In this Act, Wabanaki Nations seek opportunities for engagement and collaboration in decision-making about their lands. LD 958 removes the state of Maine's power to take Wabanaki Nations' tribal land through eminent domain, a protection already afforded to almost all other federally recognized tribes. Taking tribal land without consultation 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. I support this legislation as a protective measure to guarantee consultation and mutual agreement before any action is taken on tribal lands. It ensures the tribes have a voice. I recommend you vote Ought to Pass in support of LD 958.