



Committee on Judiciary
% Legislative Information Office
100 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333

April 4, 2025

RE: LD 958, An Act to Prohibit Eminent Domain on Tribal Lands

Dear Sen. Carney, Rep. Kuhn, and Members of the Judiciary Committee:

My name is Ania Wright and I am Maine Audubon's Policy Advocate. Maine Audubon is a wildlife conservation non-profit – we fulfill our mission to “conserve Maine wildlife and wildlife habitat” by engaging people of all ages in nature through a science-based approach to education, conservation, and advocacy. On behalf of Maine Audubon and our 30,000 members, supporters, and volunteers, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of LD 958, *An Act to Prohibit Eminent Domain on Tribal Lands*.

LD 958 is a step towards self-determination for the Wabanaki. The bill amends the 1980 Maine Indian Claims Settlement Act, and the 2023 Mi'kmaq Nation Restoration Act to prevent the state from seizing Wabanaki land for public uses.

The Wabanaki Nations have been stewards and advocates for wildlife and habitat for more than ten thousand years. Maine Audubon supports Wabanaki self-determination as both a step toward acknowledgement and reparation of the occupation and seizure of Wabanaki ancestral homelands and an important opportunity to help bolster health, educational, and economic outcomes; foster careful stewardship of the land; and renew partnership among neighbors.

Maine Audubon supports LD 958 because it would be a step towards recognizing the inherent right of the Wabanaki Nations to govern themselves, just as more than 570 other tribes throughout the nation are recognized. This fundamental change is overdue. Maine Audubon strongly supports this bill to restore fairness and respect for the Wabanaki Nations' sovereignty over their lands.

When the Wabanaki thrive, we all thrive. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Ania Wright
Policy Advocate