

To: Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs
From: Nora Duffy, 28 Kelley Road, Orono, 04473
Date: 4/21/2025

RE: Testimony in support of L.D. 1474, "An Act to Strengthen the Teaching of Wabanaki Studies in Maine Schools"

Senator Rafferty, Representative Murphy, and members of the Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs,

My name is Nora Duffy, I am a high school history teacher and I live in Orono.

I am testifying in support of L.D. 1474, "An Act to Strengthen the Teaching of Wabanaki Studies in Maine Schools," because I believe in the importance of teaching Wabanaki studies — and getting it right. I have seen the positive impact high-quality Wabanaki studies instruction has on both Wabanaki and non-Wabanaki students in my classroom.

When I moved to Maine and started teaching history, I was committed to incorporating Wabanaki studies into my curriculum but I barely knew where to start. With most historical topics, a Google search will find you a vast array of curriculum to work with. However, I found that this was not the case with Wabanaki studies. This changed when I found the resources on the DoE website a couple of years ago. These materials are truly invaluable. When I started implementing them, classes became so much more engaging and I built confidence in what I was providing for my students. I have been able to expand my teaching on these topics considerably, even offering a Wabanaki Studies elective next year, something I truly do not believe I would have felt equipped to do without these resources.

As a non-Indigenous educator, I believe it is essential to use a curriculum guided by Wabanaki voices. This bill would support the continued development of these excellent resources created with Wabanaki advisors. It would ensure that students are receiving an authentic education, and help teachers and schools uphold the law in a meaningful way.

For these reasons, I respectfully encourage you to support L.D. 1474. Thank you for your time and consideration of my testimony.

Sincerely,

Nora Duffy