

Legislative Testimony

By: David Von Seggern

Bill: [LD 1474](#), An Act to Strengthen the Teaching of Wabanaki Studies in Maine Schools

Date: April 21, 2025

Recommendation: Vote Ought To Pass

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

I am David Von Seggern, registered voter in the City of Westbrook, Maine. I am a strong supporter of greater recognition of our Indigenous Peoples and am proud to reside in a state that officially celebrates Indigenous Peoples Day annually in October. Maine has taken the right step to recognize the ancient heritage of its native Americans who inhabited our lands for millennia before European colonization. LD1474 sets a firm platform under that recognition. I therefore urge you to vote ought-to-pass on LD1474.

LD1474 would add one position to our state's civil service, but it is a very important one. This position will ensure that previous legislation which requires Wabanaki studies in Maine schools will, in fact, be carried out, monitored, evaluated, and improved. Adding one state-government position dedicated to our native Americans seems like a small concession in light of the fact that native American culture was the history of this land stretching back far into time before colonization.

I currently am reading Thoreau's "The Maine Woods". With so many examples, he narrates how the native Americans had an attitude of equality with the rest of nature, an attitude that we and our children would do well to study and practice. However, without judgement, we seek to have a more thorough understanding of the native Americans' way of life. LD1474 will help to achieve that.