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LD 1474

I am writing to offer my testimony in support of LD 1474, An Act to Strengthen the Teaching of Wabanaki Studies in Maine Schools.

I attended Maine schools my entire life, from Pre-K to 12th grade, and was never given any education related to Wabanaki culture, history, or current ways of life. This is a clear failure on the part of the Maine educational system, which mandates that Wabanaki Studies should be included in Maine curricula, but has historically provided little to no support to schools or teachers towards making this a reality.

The Wabanaki have lived on this land for thousands of years, and continue to live here and practice their culture despite the acts of genocide and erasure committed against them. It is Maine's responsibility to uphold its own laws and make the education of Wabanaki Studies a reality in schools across the state. This can be done thoughtfully as outlined by LD 1474, through creating a permanent position at DOE to develop Wabanaki Studies curriculum and resources, continuing to fund the work of Wabanaki advisors to the DOE, and making resources, curriculum, and trainings available to teachers at every Maine school.