

Catherine Cyrus
Brunswick
LD 1474

Dear Senator Rafferty and Representative Murphy,

I write in support of LD 1474, An Act to Strengthen the Teaching of Wabanaki Studies in Maine Schools. This bill would be a first step towards preparing Maine's dedicated teachers who struggle without the resources needed to offer adequate and accurate Wabanaki studies curriculum to their students as legally required by the 2001 passed but unfunded legislation, LD 291. LD 1474 establishes the position of a Wabanaki Studies Specialist, a permanent position within the Maine Department of Education to develop much needed curriculum and resources and wisely requires funding for qualified Wabanaki advisors to assist in creating and implementing professional development courses for teachers.

Citizens in Maine are long overdue to deepen our knowledge and understanding of the rich history and vital presence of our Wabanaki neighbors, and we are the poorer for its absence. Our communities will be greatly enriched by the knowledge, understanding and relationships that will grow with the opportunity for our children (and therefore their families) to learn more about each other and to share our stories.

Please vote ought to pass on LD 1474, an important first step in that direction.

Thank you,
Catherine Cyrus
Brunswick