

Gabrian McPhail
Vinalhaven
LD 1474

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

I am writing in strong support of LD 1474, An Act to Strengthen the Teaching of Wabanaki Studies in Maine Schools, and I urge the Committee to vote Ought to Pass.

More than 20 years after the passage of LD 291, many schools still lack the resources and support to meaningfully teach Wabanaki Studies, despite it being state law. LD 1474 addresses this gap by:

Establishing a permanent Wabanaki Studies Specialist position at the Department of Education.

Ensuring that Wabanaki voices guide curriculum development and teacher training.

Providing funding to help districts implement Wabanaki Studies activities and resources.

Strengthening teacher certification requirements to include Wabanaki Studies.

Other states have already taken similar steps to embed Indigenous studies into public education. Maine has a legal and moral obligation to do the same. This bill is a critical step toward honoring Wabanaki history, culture, and sovereignty in our schools.

Thank you for considering my testimony. Please vote Ought to Pass on LD 1474.

Sincerely,
Gabrian McPhail