

Molly Rahman  
Southwest Harbor  
LD 1474

Dear Members of the Educations and Cultural Affairs Committee,

I am writing in strong support of LD 1474, a bill that takes long-overdue steps to ensure Maine fulfills its legal and moral obligation to teach Wabanaki Studies in public K-12 schools.

More than two decades ago, Maine passed LD 291, requiring the inclusion of Wabanaki history and culture in public school curricula. Yet, more than 20 years later, we remain far from meaningful implementation. Teachers often lack access to appropriate resources, training, and support, and many schools fall short of delivering curriculum that truly honors the intent and spirit of the law. The recent report "The Wabanaki Studies Law: 21 Years After Implementation" makes this clear.

LD 1474 offers a practical and powerful remedy. By permanently establishing the Wabanaki Studies Specialist position within the Maine Department of Education, this bill ensures there is dedicated leadership to integrate Wabanaki Studies into essential instruction and graduation requirements statewide. It also acknowledges the vital importance of having Wabanaki citizens in roles that shape how their histories and cultures are taught.

In addition, LD 1474 centers Wabanaki voices in both curriculum design and teacher professional development. It secures continued funding for Wabanaki advisors who work alongside the specialist to design professional development opportunities for educators across the state. These courses will equip teachers with the tools and understanding needed to teach Wabanaki Studies with respect, accuracy, and depth.

Further, the bill supports local school districts by providing grants for Wabanaki Studies activities and materials—resources that will help bring these important lessons to life in classrooms and communities.

Maine should not be trailing behind other states like Montana, Oregon, and Minnesota, which have already established robust support systems for Indigenous studies. LD 1474 positions Maine to begin catching up—by funding leadership, honoring Wabanaki expertise, and preparing teachers to uphold a law that has been on the books for over two decades.

Finally, this bill takes the critical step of embedding Wabanaki Studies into teacher certification requirements, ensuring that new generations of educators are prepared from the start to teach these essential lessons.

LD 1474 is not just about compliance—it is about truth-telling, respect, and justice. It's about ensuring every student in Maine grows up with an honest understanding of the Wabanaki Nations—their past, their present, and their future.

I urge you to vote in favor of this important legislation.

Thank you for your time and commitment.

Sincerely,  
Molly Rahman, concerned citizen  
Southwest Harbor