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LD 1474

LD 1474 An Act to Strengthen the Teaching of Wabanaki Studies in Maine Schools
by Rep. Laurie Osher

I write in support of this Act as it is in the best interest of Maine students to have the very highest standards in educational excellence. Wabanaki studies are multi-faceted, enhancing each course provided to students throughout the educational process. This writer has witnessed the excitement students have in being taught Wabanaki Studies and the sense of wanting to be connected to this vast knowledge base that Wabanaki Peoples provide.

The teaching of Wabanaki Studies in Maine is Law, yet few schools succeed in offering a curriculum as most schools do not have the resources or time to develop the curriculum necessary for the Law.

LD 1474 would resolve the issue of time and curriculum development by establishing the position of a Wabanaki Studies Specialist in the Maine Department of Education. Advisors working with the Specialist would create and implement professional short-term courses for all teachers in Maine, and the Department of Education would adopt rules that would require teachers to complete the course to qualify for teaching certification.

Maine is currently behind Montana, Oregon, and Minnesota in developing and implementing this vital coursework throughout the state.

Wabanaki wisdom and knowledge is far-reaching and applicable to every course that students find in their existing curriculum. This is an Act that simply must be passed so that our students and teachers may stand in excellence along with the other states that provide this crucial knowledge base.

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