

Matthew Pascucci  
Bangor  
LD 1474

To the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee,

I am writing to voice my enthusiastic support for LD 1474 and to encourage you to vote Ought to Pass for this bill.

I have been a resident and high school teacher in Maine for four years. As a newcomer to the area, I had little awareness of the history of the region. Resources from and interactions with the current Wabanaki Specialist have been invaluable to my understanding of the area, its long history, and its present situation.

Further, as I am beginning to implement Wabanaki studies materials, I have found a wide variance in how much students who have grown up in Maine are aware of Wabanaki culture, history, and contemporary concerns. It seems clear in my short time here that LD1474 is a necessary bill to support the existing law LD291.

Even though it will require some extra training, I also strongly support requiring teachers to have formal training in Wabanaki studies for state certification. Where I have been able to engage this training, it has always improved my teaching practice, not only in Wabanaki studies but across my whole practice. I have seen consistently that Wabanaki studies are aligned with the best practices that the Maine DOE is actively moving towards: interdisciplinary learning, hands on/minds on learning, project-based learning, community and place-based learning, and encouraging students to have a real, impactful voice in their classrooms and their communities. In my experience, strengthening Wabanaki studies in Maine strengthens education in Maine.

I strongly encourage you to vote Ought to Pass on this bill, and I thank you for your time in considering this written testimony.

Sincerely,

Matt Pascucci