

Jeremy Cluchey  
Bowdoinham  
LD 395

Dear Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and members of the Judiciary Committee,  
My name is Jeremy Cluchey. I appreciate having the opportunity to submit testimony in support of LD 395.

The more I have learned about the history of colonialism in Maine, the more I have come to understand how essential it is that we recognize Wabanaki sovereignty. Full recognition of Wabanaki sovereignty is critical to the continuance of longstanding Wabanaki decision-making and land care traditions that improve the wellbeing of people, lands, and waters.

Currently, Wabanaki Tribal governments are made to operate as quasi-municipalities when it comes to acquiring new trust lands, tending to existing Tribal lands, and furthering economic development. The current law imposes a barrier on full expression of Wabanaki sovereignty that hinders projects, resources, and programs that would otherwise benefit land, water, and people. It also adds a barrier to Wabanaki inclusion in federal legislation, blocking Wabanaki access to federal policy and funding that might otherwise support land care and communities. Wabanaki Nations are alone among US federally-recognized Tribes in having to navigate this additional layer of state control.

In truth, Wabanaki sovereignty exists whether we recognize it or not. Please take this opportunity to right an historic inequity and recognize the inherent sovereignty of the Wabanaki.

Thank you for your consideration and for your service to our state.

Jeremy Cluchey  
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