

Carey Hotaling
Freeport
LD 395

To: Committee on Judiciary
From: Carey Hotaling, Freeport, Maine
Date: 2/17/2026
RE: Testimony in Support of LD 395

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and members of the Committee on Judiciary,
My name is Carey Hotaling, and I am a retired teacher living in Freeport. I am
testifying in support of LD 395 because it ensures long overdue equal treatment for
the Wabanaki Nations and supports economic opportunity for all of Maine.

Currently, the Wabanaki Nations are the only federally recognized tribes in the
country that must be specifically named in federal laws to benefit from them. LD 395
modernizes the Maine Indian Claims Settlement Act and the Aroostook Band of
Micmacs Settlement Act so the Penobscot Nation, Passamaquoddy Tribe, Houlton
Band of Maliseet Indians, and Mi'kmaq Nation can access the same federal laws and
opportunities as the other 570 federally recognized tribes.

Modernizing these laws is also an economic win-win. A 2022 analysis by the Harvard
Project on American Indian Economic Development found that removing
jurisdictional barriers would benefit not only the Wabanaki Nations but also rural
Maine. Across Indian Country, federal self-determination policies have led to the
creation of thousands of jobs and the production of hundreds of millions of dollars in
goods and services. Allowing the Wabanaki Nations access to the same federal tools
available to other tribes will foster economic growth that strengthens the broader
regional economy.

Maine needs this economic boost to our rural areas. This amendment has broad
support for a 40 year-old law, and is way past due. LD 395 is sponsored by Sen.
Rachel Talbot Ross and co-sponsored by Democratic, Republican, and Independent
legislators, including Maine House Minority Leader Billy Bob Faulkingham.

I respectfully urge you to support LD 395. Thank you for your time and
consideration.

Sincerely,
Carey Hotaling, Freeport, Maine