

Honorable Members of the Judiciary Committee,

My name is Elisabeth Bialosky, I have a master's degree in social work, and I live in South Portland, Maine.

I am writing testimony in strong support of LD 395, "An Act to Restore Access to Federal Laws Beneficial to the Wabanaki Nations."

I worked in education the majority of my career. Preserving indigenous rights is vital to the pursuit of justice in our country. This is done both through the passing of knowledge in educational curricula and settings, but also in legislation that guarantees the legal rights of tribes.

Currently, the Wabanaki Nations are the only federally recognized tribes that must be explicitly written into each federal law to benefit from it. LD 395 would modernize the *1980 Maine Indian Claims Settlement Act* (MICSA) and the *Aroostook Band of Micmacs Settlement Act* so that the Wabanaki Nations can benefit from most existing and future federal laws that apply to the other 570 federally recognized tribes. The legislation also extends to the Mi'kmaq Nation – which did not participate in MICSA – the same rights granted to the Penobscot Nation, Passamaquoddy Tribe, and Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians.

I respectfully encourage you to support LD 395. Thank you for your time and consideration of my testimony.

Sincerely,

Elisabeth Bialosky

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LD 395

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