



Dear Honorable members of the Judiciary Committee,

I am writing today on behalf of the Maine Network of Community Food Councils, voicing our support for LD 395: An Act to Restore Access to Federal Laws Beneficial to the Wabanaki Nations. The members of our network believe that the issues we have in our food system are interconnected to numerous other issues that cause financial hardship, inequities and harm to local communities, including tribal communities. In our shared network values statement we say, “We acknowledge our history of institutional racism, colonialism and patriarchy and their resulting power imbalances. As such, we value the continued learning and following of anti-racist and anti-colonial practices as we seek to help bring about food justice and sovereignty in this place many of us now call Maine.” In keeping with that value, we felt compelled to speak on this bill today.

LD 395 will address the long standing exclusion of the Wabanaki Nations from numerous federal laws that would have had the potential to empower them to independently receive federal disaster relief, hire and retain medical professionals for tribal areas, to ensure the environmental protection of their lands, and many other actions. The results of this disempowerment by the State of Maine has caused economic and health hardships to our Wabanaki neighbors. This bill can help rectify these harms.

We support LD 395 because we support every community's right to sovereignty and self determination, and of course, to food. We urge you to vote “Ought to Pass” on LD 395 and we thank you for your time.