



BASKAHEGAN COMPANY

18 February 2026

Dear Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and Members of the Judiciary Committee:

Baskahegan is a fourth-generation family company which owns and manages 150,000 acres of timberland, primarily in northern Washington County. I am its Chair. I urge you to support LD 785. Let me say that we are not worried about the potential for additional (Tribal) jurisdictions in the Maine woods. We have lands in both organized towns and the Unorganized Territory, and have no problem living under a diversity of laws and regulations.

I suspect that every one of us is proud to be a Maine citizen and believes that Maine is an extraordinary place. We celebrate the beauty and productivity of our lands and waters, the civility of our political culture and the authenticity of our people. That said, Maine is also exceptional in a negative way due to our centuries-long history of frustrating nearly every effort of Wabanaki peoples to advance themselves and their neighbors. The State continues to insist that the Tribes should be subservient to the State, despite the clear meaning of the US Constitution that Tribes are nations and that only the federal government has authority over them. Wabanaki sovereignty was affirmed in *Morton v Passamaquoddy*, the landmark 1975 case that recognized the Passamaquoddy as a federally recognized tribe and became the foundation for the Indian land claims of 1980.

Justice Neil Gorsuch, appointed to the US Supreme Court by Donald Trump in 2017 (and the only Justice with experience in Federal Indian Law) wrote in an opinion of the long history of assuring tribes that they would not be subject to state jurisdiction "precisely because the states were known to be their enemies." While Gorsuch was speaking of the Cherokee in the South, his words apply to the actions and attitudes of the State of Massachusetts before 1820 and Maine after statehood.

LD 785 would initiate a new era of respectful relationships with our neighbors, the four Nations that have their home in Maine since long before we became a state. This change is overdue. Please vote in favor of LD 785.

Sincerely

Roger Milliken