

Carol Wishcamper  
Freeport  
LD 395

To Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary:

Re: Support for LD 395, an Act to Restore Access to Federal Laws Beneficial to the Wabanaki Nations

My name is Carol Wishcamper. I live in Freeport, ME. I am here to testify in support of LD 395.

I co-chaired the Maine Wabanaki State Child Welfare Truth and Reconciliation Commission from 2012-15. In our final report, issued in June 2015, our number one recommendation was to recognize tribal sovereignty, ensuring that Wabanaki nations benefit from federal laws that apply to the other 570 federally recognized tribes.

LD 395 would address 40 years of missed opportunities, redressing the exclusion requirements that have blocked Wabanaki nations from at least 151 federal laws, including the Stafford Act, Violence Against Women Act, Indian Health Care Improvement Act and a number of Environmental Protection laws.

Recognizing Wabanaki inherent sovereignty is a moral issue addressing fundamental human rights, equity and fairness. It also provides economic opportunities that have long been withheld.

I urge your support for passing LD 395. It is time to redress past harms and provide for a equitable future. I thank you for your consideration.