

Lina Martinez Nocito
Farmington, ME
February 19, 2026

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

My name is Lina Martinez Nocito, and I am a junior at the University of Maine at Farmington and an organizer with Maine Youth Power, a rural, youth-led movement fighting for human dignity, equity, and a livable future for all. I'm writing today to express my strong support for LD 785 and 395.

I truly love living in Maine, and unlike many of my high school and college classmates over the years, I want to stay here after graduation. I have a huge amount of faith in our state and the people who live in it, and have frequently been moved by the ways in which Mainers are willing to show up for each other and take care of their communities.

But deeply harmful, racist laws curtailing Wabanaki sovereignty have long loomed as a glaring exception to these ideals: a fundamental failure of our state to respect and protect all of its residents. The Wabanaki Nations have been senselessly blocked from accessing the same basic federal policies that have demonstrably benefited almost six hundred other tribes across the country for decades. These laws have stifled economic growth by staggering percentages (tribal incomes outside of Maine have risen 61% since 1989, but within Maine, they have increased by a mere 9%¹), delayed access to the Violence Against Women Act by almost two decades², and impeded Wabanaki Nations' ability to access an array of basic resources such as emergency funds for addressing public health crises and natural disasters³. As a proud resident of Maine, I find this absolutely appalling.

LD 785 and 395 offer Maine the chance to take a key step toward tackling the profound discrimination the Wabanaki community has faced in Maine for centuries. For this reason, I support their passage, and I urge you to do the same.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Lina Martinez Nocito

¹ <https://www.wabanakialliance.com/ld-785-talking-points/>

² <https://www.wabanakialliance.com/ld-785-ld-395-faq/>

³ <https://www.wabanakialliance.com/ld-395-talking-points/>