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Testimony in Support of LD 395: An Act to Restore Access to Federal Laws Beneficial to the Wabanaki Nations Sponsored by Senator Rachel Talbot Ross
Presented by Maulian Bryant, Executive Director

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and members of the Judiciary Committee. My name is Maulian Bryant. I am a Penobscot Nation tribal citizen and serve as Executive Director of the Wabanaki Alliance. I present this testimony today on behalf of the Wabanaki Alliance in support of LD 395: An Act to Restore Access to Federal Laws Beneficial to the Wabanaki Nations. We extend our gratitude to tribal leadership for their guidance and strength; and we deeply appreciate the bill sponsor Senator Talbot Ross for her tireless advocacy for Wabanaki rights and self-determination.

The Wabanaki Alliance was formed in 2020 by tribal leadership of the four Wabanaki tribes to educate about the need for securing sovereignty for our people. In five short years, we have built a network of support all across our homelands now called Maine, we have worked to build trusting relationships with lawmakers, we have advocated for policies that enhance tribal sovereignty and empower our communities and the rural communities around us. Today, I stand here with the support of over 335 businesses and organizations who believe in sovereignty. We have had such tremendous allies and progress.

This bill for access to federal laws beneficial to Wabanaki Nations corrects an inequity in the Settlement Act from 1980. This bill is about fairness. Since 1980 there have been roughly 150 laws that have provisions