



February 19th, 2026

Testimony in support of LD395: An Act to Restore Access to Federal Laws  
Beneficial to the Wabanaki Nations

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and esteemed members of the Judiciary  
Committee.

My name is Eli Durand-McDonnell, I am from Bar Harbor, and I work as the Policy Director at Maine Youth Power, a youth-led youth movement working throughout rural and suburban Maine to win human dignity, equity and a liveable future for all. Today, I am testifying on behalf of my organization in support of LD395: An Act to Restore Access to Federal Laws Beneficial to the Wabanaki Nations

At the start of this legislative session, we surveyed more than a hundred of our members from all across the state, asking what legislation they would like to see prioritized. As responses began to stream in, it soon became clear that the expansion of Wabanaki sovereignty was a top priority. Our members saw the urgent and long overdue need for Wabanaki Nations to determine their own futures and to benefit from crucial federal laws from which they have long been excluded. Simultaneously, this sentiment is not just shared by young people—there is massive bipartisan support in the statehouse, across businesses and organizations, and within our neighborhoods that we need to rectify antiquated laws that unfairly limit the Wabanaki Nations.

As I noted in my introduction, and as echoed by our member responses, Maine Youth Power envisions a future with human dignity, equity, and a liveable future for all. This bill would be a crucial step towards that future. LD395 would allow Wabanaki Nations to benefit from at least 151 federal laws they have previously been excluded from, many of which provide significant protections for public health and wellbeing. Mainers know it is time to act, and time to do the right thing. I urge you to support LD395.

Sincerely,  
Eli Durand-McDonnell