

To: Sen. Carney, Rep. Kuhn, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary

From: Isabelle Rogers, Starks, JustME for JustUS

Re: Support for LD 785, An Act to Advance Self-determination for Wabanaki Nations

Sen. Carney, Rep. Kuhn and members of the Judiciary Committee, my name is Isabelle Rogers. I am a resident of Starks and am a community organizer with JustME for JustUS, a youth-led organization. I am testifying in support of LD 785.

Wabanaki nations currently do not have the same rights as all other federally recognized tribes across the United States. In 1980, the State of Maine and U.S. Congress passed legislation to resolve debate between the U.S. government and the state of Maine over the illegal sale of federally protected tribal lands. This act has contributed to prolonged tribal injustice, and has resulted in decades of social and economic barriers for the Wabanaki people and their surrounding communities. The Wabanaki deserve the same rights of all other recognized tribes, and basic human decency that everyone should receive.

Passing LD 785 will restore the Wabanaki Nations' right to self-govern under the same federal laws that apply to tribes elsewhere in the United States. Over 1,600 Mainers have previously testified in supporting tribal sovereignty legislation, and this bill has bipartisan support in record numbers across the state.

For all the above reasons, I urge you to vote in favor of LD 785.

Thank you,
Isabelle Rogers