



*February 24, 2026*

*Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry*

*RE: LD 1054, An Act to Amend the Laws Governing Conservation Easements*

Senator Talbot Ross, Representative Pluecker, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry,

My name is Kaya Lolar, and I am the Director of Policy & Wabanaki Studies at the Maine Environmental Education Association (MEEA). I'm writing to you in support of LD 1054, An Act to Amend the Laws Governing Conservation Easements.

MEEA represents over 2,000 Maine educators—classroom teachers and community-based educators—who provide immersive environmental and outdoor learning experiences for youth. We work hard to ensure that all students in what we now call Maine have access to a strong and holistic environmental education. We also know that no environmental education is complete without the foundational knowledge of the first stewards of our land, and we strive to honor and uplift the Wabanaki Nations, whose homelands we stand on now.

LD 1054 will provide clarity to the Maine Conservation Easement Act, allowing the Wabanaki Nations to access the same legal tools as land trusts and municipalities. The language in this bill is derived from similar legislation passed in California with already proven benefits to the conservation sector. In 2023, the World Economic Forum reported that, while Indigenous peoples make up only 5% of the global population, they protect and steward 80% of the Earth's remaining biodiversity. Therefore, it will benefit us all on this land we all now call home, to ensure that the first stewards of our land can continue to care for and nurture it for generations to come.

On behalf of the Maine Environmental Education Association, I urge you to support LD 1054. Thank you for your leadership on this important issue.

Sincerely,

Kaya Lolar

Director of Policy & Wabanaki Studies

Maine Environmental Education Association