



Permanent Commission RACIAL, INDIGENOUS & TRIBAL POPULATIONS

LD 210 - Governor's Recommended Fiscal Year 2026 - 2027 Unified General Fund Budget

February 28, 2025

Senator Rotundo, Representative Gattine, and Honorable Members of the Appropriations and Financial Affairs Committee

Senator Baldacci, Representative Salsbury, and Honorable Members of the State and Local Government Committee.

My name is Ariel Ricci, and I am the Executive Director for the Permanent Commission on the Status of Racial, Indigenous, and Tribal Populations (the Permanent Commission). The Permanent Commission's budget initiative appears on pages **A-546 to A-548** of the Governor's Recommended FY26-27 General Fund Biennial Budget.

The Permanent Commission is an independent commission that is required by statute to:

"Promote, implement and coordinate programs that create and improve opportunities and incorporate the goal of eliminating disparities for historically disadvantaged racial, indigenous, and tribal populations in the State." [5 MRSA §25001]

We achieve this through developing and sharing research and resources to support policy makers to understand the communities that exist in Maine and the some of the barriers that prevent all Mainers from thriving. Our most recent annual report (January 2025) details our work through research, community engagement, and government agency collaborations during the 2024 calendar year.

In submitting our budget request for FY26 - FY27, we limited it to initiatives that are absolutely necessary to maintain our current activities and programming. We have three initiatives listed on **A-547**:

- The first relates a necessary cost increase through DAFS from the financial and human resources service center.
- The second relates to a necessary cost increase through DAFS to maintain the current OIT services.
- The third relates to the cost of a position reclassification that was completed in August 2024.

In the interests of fiscal prudence, the Permanent Commission is absorbing cost increases associated with maintaining office space and other cost increases associated with inflation. Thank you for your time and consideration and I will be happy to answer any questions.