

**Testimony of
Passamaquoddy Tribal
Representative Aaron Dana
Friday, April 4, 2025, 1 P.M.
State House Rm. 438
Hearing before the Committee on Judiciary**

LD 958, An Act to Prohibit Eminent Domain on Tribal Lands

My name is Aaron Dana the Passamaquoddy tribal Representative, and I come before you today not only as a proud Passamaquoddy man, but also as a representative of my people. I rise in strong support of LD 958, *An Act to Prohibit Eminent Domain on Tribal Lands*.

For generations, the Passamaquoddy people have fought to protect the lands that are central to our identity, our sovereignty, and our survival. These lands are not just property—they are sacred. They carry the stories of our ancestors, the roots of our traditions, and the foundation of our future. And yet, under current law, they remain vulnerable to the threat of seizure through eminent domain.

LD 958 is not just a legal protection—it is a moral necessity. It recognizes that tribal lands are not parcels on a map to be negotiated or taken. They are the living heart of who we are as a people. Prohibiting the use of eminent domain on tribal lands is a long-overdue step in honoring our sovereignty and upholding the trust and respect that should exist between the State of Maine and its Wabanaki Nations.

Passing this bill will have profound and lasting benefits. It will:

1.
Affirm Tribal Sovereignty – This bill is an affirmation that the State of Maine recognizes and respects the inherent sovereignty of tribal nations. It acknowledges our right to govern and protect our lands without fear of state interference.
2.
Promote Stability and Security – Removing the threat of eminent domain offers peace of mind to our communities, families, and future generations. We will be able to invest in our land, our housing, our infrastructure, and our economies without fear of sudden displacement or disruption.
3.
Strengthen Tribal-State Relations – LD 958 is an opportunity for the State to demonstrate that it is committed to building a future of mutual respect, collaboration, and trust with the tribes of Maine.
4.
Protect Sacred and Cultural Sites – Much of our land contains irreplaceable cultural, spiritual, and ecological resources. This bill ensures those places are safeguarded, not subject to destruction or appropriation.

Too often in our history, tribal lands have been taken, divided, or exploited under the guise of "progress." LD 958 is a chance to draw a line in the sand and say: no more. Not here. Not now. Not ever again.

I urge you to support this bill not just as a piece of legislation, but as a step toward justice, sovereignty, and a more equitable future for the Passamaquoddy people and all tribal nations in Maine.

And want to give a Kci woliwon to minority leader for his hard work and efforts to bring forth this bill
Woliwon. Thank you.