



SIERRA CLUB

MAINE CHAPTER

PO Box 88
Belfast, ME 04915
Phone: (207) 761-5616
www.sierraclub.org/maine

To: Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture Conservation and Forestry
From: Becky Bartovics, Sierra Club Maine
Date: January 25, 2023
Re: **Testimony in Support of LD 25: An Act To Provide Indigenous Peoples Free Access To State Parks**

Chairs, Senator Ingwersen and Representative Pluecker, and Members of ACF, my name is Becky Bartovics, and I am writing as a volunteer with Sierra Club Maine, representing over 22,000 supporters and members statewide. Founded in 1892, Sierra Club is one of our nation's oldest and largest environmental organizations. We work diligently to amplify the power of our 3.8 million members and supporters nation-wide. We urge you to vote "ought to pass" on LD 25.

LD 25 provides that any tribal member of the federally recognized tribes of Maine would have complimentary access to all of our State Parks and historic sites. Long before we colonizers seized them, Maine's indigenous people stewarded these lands. It seems only fair and just that we offer free access to these resources to the original inhabitants of Maine's Parks so many residents already enjoy for free (Disabled Veterans and seniors). Wabanaki families deserve access to lands they formerly cared for. Healing wounds through access to the natural world will have broad benefits to the individuals and likewise to the State of Maine. Please vote "ought to pass" on LD 25.

Sincerely,

Becky Layton Bartovics

Sierra Club Maine, Volunteer Leadership

273 North Shore Rd

North Haven, ME 04853