

Audrey Piltch
Freeport
LD 1642

To: Representative Osher, Senator Rotundo, and Honorable members of the committee

From: Audrey Piltch, Melanie Rose, and Minka Holtrop

Re: Testimony in Support of LD 1642, An Act to Strengthen the Teaching of Wabanaki Studies in Maine Schools

We are members of the Student Activists in Freeport club at Freeport High School in Freeport, Maine. We are writing as students to urge you to vote “ought to pass” on LD 1642.

As eager students of Freeport High School and students of the world, we write to ask you to advocate for our full and well-rounded education and vote “ought to pass” on LD 1642. As teenagers going out into a life of independence, we know that humans aren’t perfect. We understand—from years of history classes—that people are capable of both atrocities and wonders. Whatever our pasts, it’s essential that we have the tools and options to learn it all.

We believe it’s important to recognize and include the history of Wabanaki peoples. What education we do have around indigenous groups in the U.S. is national rather than regional, and the information is limited and far too broad. We take the responsibility of educating ourselves seriously, including knowing who we live alongside here in Maine. As Mainers, we feel we should know not only national history about indigenous peoples but specific regional history—about the Maliseet, the Mi’kmaq, the Passamaquoddy, the Penobscot. Those are stories that are vital to be told, stories we all need to hear.

We believe the purpose of learning history is to understand the foundations that led us to the present and to build our empathy to be able to approach modern problems with full perspective and sensitivity.

Again, we wish to know our own past, therefore we urge you to vote “ought to pass” on LD 1642.

Respectfully submitted,
Student Activists in Freeport