

mary miller  
oakfield  
LD 1642

I am writing to support the passage of LD 1642, "An Act to Strengthen the Teaching of Wabanaki Studies in Maine Schools." I am a retired Maine educator, and a member of the Committee on Native American Ministries in the New England Conference of the United Methodist Church.

I believe the study of Wabanaki history, governance and culture, as well as of colonization, oppression, and attempted erasure by white settlers, is vital to our understanding of one another and the decisions we make going forward. The contributions of the Wabanaki people, in the past and today, play an important role in the life of what is now Maine. Both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students benefit from a full comprehension of Wabanaki life and relationship with other communities, past and present, and all are better prepared to be engaged citizens.

The strong Wabanaki studies law passed in 2001 has not been well implemented. LD 1642 will help to carry through its goals, reinstating the Wabanaki Studies Commission as a source of guidance and resources. It will also give significant support and funding to educators and their training.

I encourage passage of LD 1642.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Miller  
Oakfield, Maine