

Erika Arthur
Freedom

Dear Chairs and members of the Judiciary Committee,
I am writing in full support of LD1626. For 40 years the state of Maine has stood in the way of Wabanaki Nations exercising their inherent sovereignty. This is only the most recent chapter in a long history of non-Native people trampling on the Tribes' inalienable rights to govern themselves, to make decisions about the lands and waters they have lived in relation with for thousands of years, and to protect and provide for their citizens. This Act can be an important step in repairing some of these harms. In resolving the deeply problematic aspects of the Land Claims Settlement, as recommended by the esteemed Task Force, Wabanaki Nations will be able to access the benefits of federal recognition, and we can all move toward a future based on mutual respect. This move is long overdue.