

Michael LeComte
Portland
LD 958

Testimony in Support of LD 958

Senator, Representative, and respected members of the committee,

I stand in strong support of LD 958, which seeks to ensure that the Wabanaki Nations are protected from the state's use of eminent domain without consultation or consent. Under the current law, the Wabanaki Nations are unfairly excluded from the same protections that other federally recognized tribes enjoy. This bill will correct that imbalance and prevent further harm to tribal lands, such as the historical example of Maine Route 190, which was taken from the Passamaquoddy Reservation in 1925 without any tribal input. LD 958 ensures that the Wabanaki Nations' sovereignty is respected moving forward.

This legislation promotes cooperation rather than conflict. It guarantees that any future state projects affecting tribal lands will only proceed after meaningful consultation with tribal governments, ensuring that all decisions are made collaboratively. If a project is genuinely in the public's best interest, the state and tribes can work together to find mutually beneficial solutions that respect both the land and the people.

Passing LD 958 is a crucial step toward justice and equality for the Wabanaki Nations. It reaffirms their right to protect their lands and cultural heritage as sovereign governments, ensuring they are treated on par with other federally recognized tribes. I urge you to support this bill and help restore fairness for the Wabanaki Nations.

Thank you for your time and consideration.