

Roy & June Smoot
Kennebunk
LD 958

Dear Sen. Carney and Rep. Kuhn
Judiciary Committee Chairs

Leader and Rep. Billy Bob Faulkingham has submitted LD 958, An Act to Prohibit Eminent Domain on Tribal Lands, which we passionately support, and strongly encourage your committee to do the same by moving LD 958 out to be voted on in both legislative bodies.

LD 958 restores fairness and respects Wabanaki Nations' sovereignty over their lands. No nation should have their land taken without consultation or agreement. Exercising eminent domain over Wabanaki Tribal Lands would be a violation of Federal policy which protects tribal lands from state-level eminent domain. Maine's 1980 Settlement Acts unfairly exclude Wabanaki Nations from the same protection enjoyed by virtually all other tribal nations.

Maine Route 190, which cuts through the heart of the Passamaquoddy Reservation at Sipayik, was taken by eminent domain in 1925—a decision made without tribal input. LD 958 would ensure that no such action happens again without tribal consultation.

This bill encourages collaboration, not conflict; respect, not over-reaching actions. If a project could truly benefit the public, the state, and the tribes, Maine should collaborate with tribal leaders to find a solution which benefits all parties. LD 958 is a protective measure to guarantee consultation and mutual agreement before any action is taken on tribal lands. It ensures the tribes have a voice, which is the moral and just action to take.

Bottom line: LD 958 is a step towards justice and fairness. It respects and will codify that Wabanaki Nations are governments with inherent power to regulate their territories and tribal lands.

Thank you for moving LD 958 forward with your "Ought to Pass" to our Maine Legislature.