

Marla Stelk
Gorham
LD 958

I am writing to express my support for LD958 - An Act to Prohibit Eminent Domain on Tribal Lands. For far too long, American Indian Tribes have been subjected to broken treaty rights and promises by the federal government. Fortunately, some progress was made by the federal government during the Biden Administration to restore Tribal sovereignty. Maine, however, as compared to most other states, is lagging seriously behind in its treatment of Tribal communities and Nations, particularly via the Settlement Act of 1980 which essentially ensures that the State has the final authority to determine legislation concerning the "lands owned by or held in trust for Indians or Indian nations, tribes or bands of Indians" rather than the federal government. Allowing eminent domain to happen on the little bit of land remaining in Tribal hands would be unconscionable and downright morally and ethically wrong. I urge you and our decision-makers in our wonderful State of Maine to step up and do the right thing by supporting this important and overdue bill.