

Holly Lisett Anderson
Harrington
LD 785

Testimony in support of LD 785:

An Act to Enact the Remaining Recommendations of the Task Force on Changes to the Maine Indian Claims Settlement Implementing Act

February 19, 2026

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary,

My name is Holly Lisett Anderson. I am a Maine resident of Harrington and an undergraduate psychology student at the University of New England. Thank you for reading my testimony today. I truly hope that this finds you well and influences you to support LD 785, An Act to Enact the Remaining Recommendations of the Task Force on Changes to the Maine Indian Claims Settlement Implementing Act.

This legislation would make necessary changes to the Maine Indian Claims Settlement Implementing Act, addressing significant problems in the law that prohibit the Wabanaki Nations in Maine from exercising their inherent right to self govern. There is no reason that this native tribe should be excluded as all other tribes in the United States are federally recognized and protected.

This change in the law does not only benefit the Wabanaki Nations, as Harvard researchers suggests that tribal self-government would add \$330 million annually to Maine's GDP, create 2,700+ jobs (more than half filled by non-tribal rural Mainers), and generate \$39 million yearly in state and local tax revenue. The Wabanaki tribe has also been protecting our beautiful state by maintaining sustainable ecological practice. This in turn would only continue to help our conservation and economic status, if they were given the recognition they deserve.

This is a well supported issue with more than 1,600 Mainers testifying to previous legislation surrounding tribal sovereignty. These supports come from all walks of life, including environmental organizations, social justice organizations, organized labor, and faith-based groups with tens of thousands of members. Over 300 businesses and organizations have joined the Wabanaki Alliance Tribal Coalition and will only continue to gain support from Mainers all over the state.

I appreciate your time today and ask for just a little bit of sympathy for those who have been pushed aside for decades. Please consider voting "ought to pass" for LD 785 to recognize all citizens of Maine as such and to give the recognition they deserved to receive.

Sincerely,
Holly Lisett Anderson
Harrington, Maine