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I testify, as a Maine-born citizen, that, as a moral principle, the Wabanaki tribes of our region are owed all rights and claims that have been denied them throughout history.

The Wabananki tribes should be consulted for their knowledge and advice in areas of nature and the environment, given that they are the progenitors of human settlement on the land of this region, and that they are the true environmental stewards of 'The Americas'. Who, in our nation, respects nature more Native Americans? Historically speaking, who has more experience living off the land and sea? And what group of people has had more life snuffed out in the name of "conquest"? And yet these native peoples have survived, have managed to keep their value systems intact, in spite of persecution and attempts of annihilation. Collectively, these tribes understand and deeply respect nature and the environment in a holistic manner that the rest of us cannot hope to grasp...unless we resolve to own up to our tragic mistreatment of them, fully restore their rights as people and citizens, and vow to learn from them.

Throughout the United States, Native Americans are increasingly recognized and honored for their ancestral knowledge. They deserve no less. Indeed, they deserve much more. They deserve to have all their personal rights, along with all land claims, fully reinstated. Why should the State of Maine offer our Wabanaki peoples any less?