

Lucy Birkett
Freeport
LD 785

Dear Sen. Carney, Rep. Kuhn, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary,

My name is Lucy Birkett and I live in Freeport. I am writing to testify 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.

Restoring the inherent self-governance capabilities of the Wabanaki Nations would positively impact the Wabanaki Nations, as well as Maine in general, including many rural towns that have often been left behind. History, as well as studies, have shown us that when Nations (federally recognized governments) have the autonomy to govern their lands and communities, economic and social wellbeing increases, lands are better maintained, and surrounding communities are uplifted. Furthermore, the passage of this bill will go a long way towards repairing broken relationships between the State of Maine and the Wabanaki Nations. After hundreds of years of removal, land dispossession, broken treaties, genocide, cultural genocide, neglect, and harm—the restoration of Wabanaki self-governance is the least Maine can do, and a moral imperative.

Thank you for considering my plea to vote enthusiastically for LD 785, and for your service to the people of Maine.