



Dear Honorable members of the Judiciary Committee,

I am writing today on behalf of the Maine Network of Community Food Councils, voicing our support for LD 785: An Act to Enact the Remaining Recommendations of the Task Force on Changes to the Maine Indian Claims Settlement Implementing Act. The members of our network believe that the issues we have in our food system are interconnected to numerous other issues that cause financial hardship, inequities and harm to local communities, including tribal communities. In our shared network values statement we say, “We acknowledge our history of institutional racism, colonialism and patriarchy and their resulting power imbalances. As such, we value the continued learning and following of anti-racist and anti-colonial practices as we seek to help bring about food justice and sovereignty in this place many of us now call Maine.” In keeping with that value, we felt compelled to speak on this bill today.

The Task Force on Changes to the Maine Indian Claims Settlement Implementing Act identified a lack of tribal sovereignty in Maine as a major barrier for the Wabanaki Nations in economic development, as evidenced by the horrifying statistic shared by the Wabanaki Alliance that, “Childhood poverty in Wabanaki communities ranges from 40% to 77%, compared to Maine’s overall rate of 15%.”

We support LD 785 because we support every community's right to sovereignty and self determination, and of course, to food. We urge you to vote “Ought to Pass” on LD 785 and we thank you for your time.