

Emilia Dahlin
Gorham
LD 785

Re: 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
Sen. Carney, Rep. Kuhn and members of the Judiciary Committee,

My name is Emilia Dahlin and I live in Gorham (in Wabanaki Territory).

I am writing 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

I believe we have a responsibility to support any legislation that will contribute to the sovereignty and health of the tribes, which LD 785 does.

Years ago, I was struck by the quote, "Every village is our village. Every child is our child." We are all connected and related in some way, and we are responsible for and to one another.

Children are bearing the brunt of the Settlement Act's failures.

Childhood poverty in Wabanaki communities ranges from 40% to 77%, compared to Maine's overall rate of 15%.

This is a shameful percentage, and I believe we have a moral imperative to protect children wherever and whenever possible.

For 40 years, restrictions in the 1980 Maine Indian Claims Settlement Act (MICSA) have blocked the Wabanaki Nations from accessing all of the federal self-determination policies that helped 570 other tribes create thousands of jobs and generate hundreds of millions in economic activity. While tribal income outside of Maine grew 61% since 1989, Wabanaki income grew only 9% (compared to Maine's 25% overall). It's time to remove these barriers.

Thank you to the committee members for your work and for supporting LD 785.