

Marvin Ellson
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LD 785

As convener of the Wabanaki Allies Working Group at the First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ in South Portland, I urge the members of the Joint Judiciary Committee to support the passage of LD 785, which will help repair state-tribal relationships by reestablishing self-governance for the Wabanaki Nations. Taking this step will modernize the 1980 Maine Indian Claims Settlement Act by further implementing the recommendations of the Legislature's own bipartisan task force. In doing so, it will benefit the tribes and the adjacent rural communities economically. Even more, it's the morally principled thing to do, to show respect for and honor tribal sovereignty, in keeping with how other federally recognized tribes are treated. It's time to end the years of legal disputes and for the State of Maine to recognize the sovereignty and self-determination of the Wabanaki Nations as "nations within the nation," not as "municipalities with the state."