

To: Committee on Judiciary

From: Rosalind Erwin, Kennebunk

Date: February 18, 2026

RE: Testimony in support of LD785: An Act to Enact the Remaining Recommendations of the Task Force on Changes to the Maine Indian Claims Settlement Implementing Act

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and members of the Committee on Judiciary,

My name is Rosalind Erwin, and I live in Kennebunk. I am testifying in support of LD785: An Act to Enact the Remaining Recommendations of the Task Force on Changes to the Maine Indian Claims Settlement Implementing Act. I recently completed the First Light Learning Journey, during which I learned from my Wabanaki neighbors the many ways the Maine Indian Land Claims Settlement Act (MICSA) prevents the Wabanaki Nations in Maine from exercising their inherent right to self-govern. Instead of evolving to meet current needs and conditions as it was designed to do, the MICSA has, for over four decades, unfairly impinged on Wabanaki sovereignty, stifled economic potential, and created a costly and unproductive working relationship between Tribal Governments and the State.

Small gestures of reform around the edges of MICSA are not enough to ensure complete access to the federal self-determination policies granted by Federal Indian Law. LD785 would implement many of the 22 consensus recommendations reached by a bipartisan task force in 2020, which was tasked to review the law's effectiveness. Implementing those recommendations will bring the rights and authority of the Passamaquoddy Tribe, Penobscot Nation, Mi'kmaq Nation, and Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians into line with those of the other 570 federally recognized tribes in the United States. Not only is it the right thing to do, but it would be a big first step towards a future of healing, unity, and shared prosperity that Mainers overwhelmingly desire.

For these reasons, I respectfully encourage you to support LD 785. Thank you for your time and consideration of my testimony.

Sincerely,

Rosalind Erwin