



**Testimony 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**

**From: The Board of Directors of Healthy Acadia
March 4, 2026**

Dear Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and distinguished members of the Judiciary Committee,

We, the Board of Directors of Healthy Acadia, are writing in strong 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.

Healthy Acadia is a community and public health coalition devoted to addressing the critical health challenges our communities face and making it possible for all people to lead healthier lives. We have been working since 2001 with hundreds of partners and thousands of community members to collaboratively address a wide range of locally-defined health needs. We serve Washington and Hancock counties, and we provide additional community health support and partnership across Maine.

Following the lead of our Wabanaki partners and leaders, Healthy Acadia stands in full support of LD 785. This bill would implement the remaining consensus recommendations of the bipartisan Task Force on Changes to the Maine Indian Claims Settlement Act, which would protect critical rights for the Wabanaki Nations, ensuring that they can benefit from more than 150 federal laws, and restoring tribal self-government. We know that bringing about parity with all of the federally recognized tribes in the U.S. would lead to significant positive outcomes, including economic growth, job creation, and improved public health.

Healthy Acadia is deeply committed to equity and justice, including justice for our Wabanaki neighbors and family, who are the original stewards of this land we call Maine, and who have suffered generations of injustices, violence, and cruelty. We are guided by our Wabanaki team members, partners, and friends to develop programming and offerings that are most beneficial to Wabanaki community goals, visions, and priorities. We are honored to partner with Tribal communities on a growing number of public health initiatives, and we continually learn from them as we work to address the health challenges community members face and to help all people thrive. We commit to our ongoing work of justice and equity, to our learning journey as



allies and partners and team members, and to doing all we can to listen, support, and follow the leadership of the Tribal communities.

Supporting LD 785 is a critical component of supporting Wabanaki communities - and all communities - to address challenges and to thrive. We have the opportunity now, with the passage of LD 785, to take an important next step to restore justice and fairness, to repair harm, and to support a brighter tomorrow. And we have a responsibility to do so. We wholeheartedly urge you to pass LD 785, for the sake of generations past, present, and future.

Respectfully submitted,
The Board of Directors of Healthy Acadia