

Louise Jensen

LD 785

To: Sen. Carney, Rep. Kuhn, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary

From: Louise Jensen, Portland ME

Re: Support for LD 785, An Act to Enact the Remaining Recommendations of the Task Force on Changes to the Maine Indian Claims Settlement Act (MICSA).

February 18, 2026

As a concerned citizen of the state of Maine, I am writing to voice my full support of LD 785, An Act to Enact the Remaining Recommendations of the Task Force on Changes to the Maine Indian Claims Settlement Act (MICSA). If passed, this bill will have a powerful impact for the Wabanaki Nations and on the non-native communities in Wabanaki homelands now called Maine.

Under the Maine Indian Claims Settlement Act, the Wabanaki Nations — and the state of Maine — are prevented from benefiting from more than 150 federal laws passed since 1980. Because of MICSA, Maine's Indigenous population has missed out on important opportunities in economic development, health care, housing, environmental protections, disaster response, and development of tribal government services.

Reports have shown that the tribes' lack of self-governance under MICSA has resulted in lagging economic growth for Wabanaki Nations, as well as their surrounding communities. In addition to loss of income, the lag also represents thousands of lost jobs, millions of dollars in lost tax revenue, and loss of opportunity for both tribal and non-tribal citizens. Maine has had to use its own resources to try to address these losses.

LD 785 implements several of the consensus recommendations of the 2020 report by the Task Force on Changes to the Maine Indian Claims Settlement Implementing Act; it takes meaningful and critical steps to ensure that Wabanaki Nations have the same rights, powers, privileges, and immunities as other federally recognized tribes in the United States.

I strongly support LD 785 and I urge you to vote for its passage. When members of our community thrive we all thrive.

Respectfully submitted,

Louise Jensen