

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

My name is Will Matteson and I live in Thomaston, ME. I am a public health professional writing as a public citizen to support LD 785.

Everyone deserves just and fair opportunities to obtain good health. Tribal citizens in Maine have faced unjust and unfair conditions that influence health – including contaminated drinking water, food insecurity, cultural disrespect, unsafe housing, higher rates of incarceration, and poverty. All these factors are compounded by other socially driven influences on health, including high rates of unemployment and limited access or proximity to quality and affordable health care.

LD 785 restores the recognition of Wabanaki self-determination and ensures equal access to federal benefits that are already available to other federally-recognized tribes in the U.S. This legislation is just, it is overdue, and it supports the health and wellbeing of tribal citizens.

Thank you for your consideration. I hope you will support LD 785.

Sincerely,

Will Matteson

Thomaston, ME