

Allison Page
South Portland
LD 395

Re: Support for LD 395, An Act to Restore Access to Federal Laws Beneficial to the Wabanaki Nations

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

LD 395 is a long-overdue measure to give the Wabanaki Nations the same benefits that every other federally recognized tribe in the United States receives, allowing them equal treatment under federal law. In addition to creating parity for the Wabanaki Nations with the other 570 federally recognized tribes, it would remove juridical barriers to help the Wabanaki Nations take advantage of federal self-determination policies, programs, and funding.

For others, federal self-determination policies have supported the creation of thousands of jobs and generated hundreds of millions of dollars in goods and services produced by Native businesses. These economic development opportunities would not only benefit the tribal community but also have positive ripple effects for the surrounding local economies, benefiting rural Maine.

The exclusion requirement has blocked Wabanaki Nations from at least 151 federal laws over the past 40 years. LD 395 would correct this inequity, unlock economic opportunity, strengthen public health and safety, and promote environmental stewardship — all while preserving existing state gaming law.

I urge you to support LD 395 and take this important step toward fairness and equal treatment for the Wabanaki Nations and the people of Maine.