

February 18, 2026

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

From: MELISSA PRESCOTT, 12 WALKER AVE., NORWAY, ME, 04268

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

Sen. Carney, Rep. Kuhn, and members of the Judiciary Committee, my name is Melissa Prescott and I live in Norway, Maine. I am sorry I am unable to attend the public hearing on LD 395, but I am grateful for the opportunity to submit written testimony in strong support of this important bill.

I support LD 395 because it corrects a long-standing inequity that has uniquely harmed the Wabanaki Nations in Maine. Under the 1980 Maine Indian Claims Settlement Act, the Wabanaki Nations in our state are the only federally recognized tribes in the country that must be explicitly written into each federal law in order to benefit from it. No other tribes face this barrier.

This bipartisan bill would amend the 1980 Maine Indian Claims Settlement Act, as well as the Aroostook Band of Micmacs Settlement Act, so the Wabanaki Nations can benefit from most existing and future federal laws that apply to the more than 570 other federally recognized tribes across the United States.

Over the past 40 years, as a result of these outdated laws, the Wabanaki Nations in Maine have been blocked from benefiting from at least 151 federal laws. These include laws providing disaster relief, public health funding, domestic violence protections, health care workforce support, and environmental regulatory authority. Being left out of these laws has limited access to resources and tools that tribes in every other state rely on to protect their communities and strengthen their economies. LD 395 would end this outdated inequity and ensure that the Wabanaki Nations in Maine are no longer excluded when Congress acts.

LD 395 will ensure that, when Congress passes legislation to benefit tribes across the country, the Wabanaki Nations in Maine are not left behind. By removing unnecessary barriers, LD 395 would open the door to economic growth and expanded opportunities that benefit not only tribal communities but all of Maine as well.

For these reasons, I urge you to vote **Ought to Pass** on this important and long-overdue reform.

Thank you for your time and for your commitment to the justice of all Mainers.

Sincerely,

Melissa Prescott, she/her

12 Walker Ave.

Norway, ME 04268