

Margaret Williams
Mercer
LD 395

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

I am writing in support of LD 395 An Act to Restore Access to Federal Laws Beneficial to the Wabanaki Nations because I believe investment in the tribes will benefit all Mainers.

Modernizing the 1980 Settlement Act would help the Wabanaki Nations take advantage of federal self-determination policies, programs, and funding that elsewhere in Indian Country have led to the creation of thousands of jobs and hundreds of millions of dollars in goods and services produced by Native businesses. These economic impacts often spill over positively into non-native communities, which would be great for our rural Maine communities.

My great great great grandparents came to Waite, Maine in the mid-1800's to run a farm and sawmill and raise a family. Although four generations of my ancestors made a living in Waite, my immediate family does not live there, as the opportunities of the region did not promise a thriving future for many of us. Perhaps if the neighboring Indian Township had been allowed to take advantage of federal legislation designed for tribal communities, the investments made there could have contributed to creating more of an interesting, interdependent rural economy that is more enticing for families like mine to stay in a very special place.

I encourage you to support LD 395. Thank you for your time and consideration of my testimony.

Sincerely,
Margaret Williams