

March 17, 2021

To: Senator Luchini, Representative Calazzo and Distinguished Members of the Committee Members of the Veterans and Legal Affairs Committee.

My name is Mary Finn and I am a resident of Saco Maine. I am writing in support of the passage of LD 554 "An Act to Create Gaming Equity and Fairness for the Native Tribes in Maine."

I have been involved in a local book group and we have been reading and studying about the of history of the Tribes in Maine. I have come to realize that the Tribes in Maine do not have the sovereignty that Tribes in other states have. The Tribes in Maine deserve the rights, privileges, powers, duties and immunities ascribed to all other federally recognized Indian Tribes. Because the traditional Native American ways of life have been taken away from the Tribes, widespread poverty has resulted with few avenues for economic development. According to the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act, Tribes in other states have the opportunity to develop gaming facilities on their land and benefit from economic improvement. I believe that the Tribes in our state should have the ability to use gaming for their economic development on their own lands, if they chose. This could provide needed income for the Tribes for education, healthcare and infrastructure.

I believe that this is not an instance of Maine granting rights, but restoring rights long due to the Tribes. Voting to pass 554 would provide the Maine Wabanaki Tribes with the same rights as all other 500 Tribes in the United States.

Thank you for your attention,

Mary Finn