



# Natural Resources Council of Maine

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April 14, 2022

The Honorable Raul Grijalva  
Chairman  
Committee on Natural Resources  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515  
[naomi.miguel@mail.house.gov](mailto:naomi.miguel@mail.house.gov)

The Honorable Bruce Westerman  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Natural Resources  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515  
[ken.degenfelder@mail.house.gov](mailto:ken.degenfelder@mail.house.gov)

Re: Support for H.R. 6707, *Advancing Equality for Wabanaki Nations Act*

Dear Chairman Grijalva and Ranking Member Westerman,

On behalf of the Natural Resources Council of Maine (NRCM), I am writing to express strong support for H.R. 6707, *Advancing Equality for Wabanaki Nations Act*. This bill was the subject of a hearing in the House Natural Resources Subcommittee for Indigenous Peoples on Thursday, March 31.

NRCM is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that advocates for protecting, restoring, and conserving Maine's environment, now and for future generations. For 60 years, NRCM has protected the places and way of life that make Maine so special by harnessing the power of science, the law, and the voices of over 25,000 members and activists in Maine and beyond. In solidarity with Wabanaki Nations, we believe it is important that we help our tribal neighbors achieve equity and fairness with every other federally recognized tribe across the country so that they can thrive.

Currently, tribes in Maine, also known collectively as the Wabanaki, are excluded from many beneficial federal laws that apply to nearly every other federally recognized tribe in the country. This means that the Wabanaki lose out on the benefits of federal laws intended to improve public health, recover from natural disasters, promote economic development, and more. H.R. 6707 would update the Maine Indian Claims Settlement Act to help correct that disparity and allow the Wabanaki to benefit from future laws enacted to aid tribes and their citizens. The bill is not retroactive, although it would be one step toward restoring sovereignty to Wabanaki Nations.

Thank you for your consideration and the opportunity to submit testimony on this important legislation.

Sincerely,

Pete Didisheim  
Senior Director of Advocacy

Cc: Representative Jared Golden, [aaron.sege@mail.house.gov](mailto:aaron.sege@mail.house.gov)  
Representative Chellie Pingree, [evan.johnston@mail.house.gov](mailto:evan.johnston@mail.house.gov)