

The Honorable Raul Grijalva
Chairman
Committee on Natural Resources
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515
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

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

Dear Chairman Grijalva and Ranking Member Westerman,

I am writing to **urge passage of H.R. 6707, *Advancing Equality for Wabanaki Nations Act***, as introduced by Representative Jared Golden of Maine and currently under consideration before the Natural Resources Committee.

Wabanaki Tribes living in Maine should have access to the same rights as Indigenous Tribes in other parts of the United States. I live in Houlton, where the reservation of the Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians is located. I want my Maliseet neighbors to enjoy the same relationship with federal Indian law as tribes who live in Minnesota or Wyoming. They should not be held back by an out-of-date agreement with the State of Maine that excludes them from benefits of federal legislation, except when they are specifically named. There are many examples of laws that have been made to benefit tribal nations over the past 40 years, in areas including economic development, law enforcement, health services, and disaster relief. Other tribes are moving ahead in economic and community development, while those in Maine are stalled. I believe that when the tribes flourish, the surrounding rural communities, like Houlton, will benefit as well.

The *Advancing Equality for Wabanaki Nations Act* is designed to correct this situation going forward, but does not change any existing laws. I hope you will vote in favor of H.R. 6707 and a better future for the Wabanaki Nations and for Maine.

Sincerely,
Mary Beth DiMarco
22 Washburn St.
Houlton, Maine 04730
maryb.dimarco@gmail.com

cc: Representative Jared Golden, aaron.sege@mail.house.gov
Representative Chellie Pingree, evan.johnston@mail.house.gov