



**Maine Unitarian Universalist
State Advocacy Network**
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Maine 130th Legislature – Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary
Testimony in Favor of LD 1907
An Act to Review State Lands and Waterways That Have Sacred,
Traditional or Other Significance to the Wabanaki Tribes

February 28, 2022

Senator Carney, Representative Harnett,
and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary:

My name is Meret Bainbridge. I live and work in the city of Saco on the Saco river. The name “Saco” is attributed to the Abenaki people’s word for “flowing out” or “outlet” and to the word “Sawacotuck” which means “mouth of the tidal stream”.

My testimony is on behalf of the Maine Unitarian Universalist State Advocacy Network. MUUSAN links Maine’s 26 Unitarian Universalist congregations in active legislative ministry. Our faith tradition is dedicated to justice, equity, and compassion in all human relations.

The Wabanaki tribes, the “People of the Dawnland” have lived in what we now call the State of Maine for over 10,000 years, in kinship and harmony with the land and natural environment. They have a deep connection to the land and waterways, a relationship they refer to as kinship, seeing the natural environment as their relations.

In our own Unitarian Universalist faith tradition, we follow eight principles. Our seventh principle was influenced by this native viewpoint:

We respect the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

We hold a deep belief that we must re-learn kinship with our natural environment from indigenous people, in order to stop the destruction from global climate change and to survive as human species.

We fully support the intent of this legislation to form a commission to review lands and places that have sacred meaning to the tribes and find ways to return these lands to the tribes.

Please vote Ought To Pass LD 1907.

Thank you.