

Senator Jim Dill
Representative Scott Landry
Joint Standing Committee on Inland Fisheries & Wildlife
100 State House Station
Augusta ME 04333
February 19, 2021

Dear Senator Dill, Representative Landry, and distinguished members of the IF&W committee,

We would like to express our strong support for LD #361, An Act To Establish a Permanent Appointment of a Member of the Wabanaki Tribes to the Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Advisory Council, sponsored by Representative Rena Newell.

As you know, the Advisory Council provides information and advice to the Commissioner of the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife on enhancing fisheries and wildlife resource management. Topics can range from fishing, hunting, and trapping regulations to guide licensure to wildlife in captivity, taxidermy, whitewater rafting, and a range of boating regulations. In establishing the Advisory Council, the legislature took care to ensure representation from each county, recognizing the importance of these matters to all Maine residents.

We are in the homeland of The Wabanaki, the People of the Dawn, who traditionally relied on hunting, fishing, and gathering to meet their subsistence needs, for perhaps as long as 12,000 years. Given that ties to the earth are interwoven with Wabanaki culture, and that a life of subsistence is inherently concerned with sustainability, theirs is an invaluable perspective.

Adding an 11th member to the Advisory Council to represent the Wabanaki makes tremendous sense. Importantly, the Wabanaki nominee would be subject to the same review by your committee and confirmation by the legislature as all other members. Participation would rotate among members of individual tribes.

Supporting LD 361 is one reasonable step to recognize the unique perspective of our Wabanaki neighbors, with the potential to improve not only fisheries and wildlife resource management, but also the relationship between indigenous peoples and the state. We encourage you to support the bill.

Sincerely,

Mary Brennan, Hancock
Jocelyn W. Hubbell, Pittston
Don Hudson, Arrowsic
Julie Isbill, Brunswick

Lucy McCarthy, Vinalhaven
Jennifer Melville, Freeport
Juanita Roushdy, Bremen

Eliza Townsend, Maine Conservation Policy
Director
Appalachian Mountain Club



John R. Manganello | President |



Sean Mahoney, Executive Vice President
Conservation Law Foundation



Aaron Dorrity, Executive Director
Frenchman Bay Conservancy



Polly Mahoney & Kevin Slater, owners
Mahoosuc Guide Service



Simon Rucker, Executive Director
Maine Appalachian Trail Land Trust



Maureen Drouin, Executive Director
Maine Conservation Voters



Jeanne Christie, President
Maine Wilderness Guides Organization



Lissa Widdoff, Interim Executive Director
Midcoast Conservancy



Don Lyons, Director of Conservation Science
National Audubon Society



Tom Duffus, Vice President & Northeast
Representative



Amy Titcomb, Board President
Three Rivers Land Trust



Betsy Cook, Maine State Program Director
Trust for Public Land

