



Maine Coast Heritage Trust

A Statewide Land Conservation Organization

Testimony in Support of LD 361: An Act To Establish a Permanent Appointment of a Member of the Wabanaki Tribes to the Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Advisory Council

Senator Dill, Representative Landry, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, my name is Jeff Romano. I appreciate this opportunity to provide testimony on behalf of Maine Coast Heritage Trust in support of LD 361.

Maine Coast Heritage Trust conserves and stewards Maine's coastal lands and islands for their renowned scenic beauty, ecological value, outdoor recreational opportunities, and contribution to community well-being. We provide statewide conservation leadership through our work with land trusts, coastal communities and other partners. Over the past four decades, we have conserved more than 150,000 acres in Maine.

By establishing a permanent seat for the Wabanaki Tribes on the Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Advisory Council, LD 361 would add a valuable perspective to the existing council. Among its several duties, the council is required to “form stakeholder groups with relevant areas of expertise to obtain information and make recommendations on enhancing fisheries and wildlife resource management” and “provide information and advice on enhancing fisheries and wildlife resource management.”

Built upon a foundation of knowledge gained over millennia, the Wabanaki expertise would add tremendous value to the council’s deliberations and greatly enhance their efforts to strengthen the management of fish and wildlife resources throughout Maine. MCHT strongly encourages the committee to unanimously support this legislation.

Thank you for your time and consideration on this matter.