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As a non-Native citizen of Maine, I wish to register my strong support for the enactment of LD 342.

If we are to successfully navigate the fraught challenges ahead of us relating to the viability of all our marine-related activities and industries - and the conservation of a healthy marine eco-system - we need to bring together ALL the knowledge and wisdom we have access to. To exclude (by default or non-action) Wabanaki voices and perspectives is to deliberately ignore deep expertise going back thousands of years. We cannot afford to do that!

Secondly, so much remains to be done to acknowledge and restore indigenous presence, history, sovereignty and expertise here in Maine, and much of this work is long and difficult. In contrast, enacting LD 342 is a relatively easy, efficient and non-contentious step in the right direction. Its impact literally benefits everyone.

I urge members of the committee to view this bill as the obvious right action it is, with self-evident benefit for all who live in Maine.