

130th Legislature
State of Maine

Senator Richard A. Bennett
District 19

April 27, 2022

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

The Honorable Bruce Westerman
Ranking Member
Committee on Natural Resources
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Grijalva and Ranking Member Westerman,

Tribal sovereignty has been one of the main focuses of the 130th Maine Legislature. There has been a historic effort to undo Maine's 42-year-old legal settlement that limited the rights of the tribes. I am supportive of this effort, and hope the Legislature does what is right.

On the federal level, your committee is considering HR 6707, sponsored by Maine Congressman Jared Golden and co-sponsored by Maine Congresswoman Chellie Pingree.

As you know, HR 6707 would amend the Maine Indian Claims Settlement Act (MICSA), thereby extending all future federal Indian laws to the Wabanaki tribes. Currently, due to the provisions of MICSA, Maine tribes have been excluded from Federal Indian laws that benefit all other federally recognized tribes.

I ask that you support HR 6707. Historically, Congress has enacted amendments to settlement acts multiple times, including in 1983 when it amended the MICSA. The passage of HR 6707 would be a significant step in putting Maine tribes on equal footing with all other federal-recognized tribes and righting a 40-year wrong that manifestly has held opportunities back from the Wabanakis. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely yours,



Richard A. Bennett
Senator

cc: Representative Jared Golden
Representative Chellie Pingree