



**SIERRA
CLUB**
FOUNDED 1892

Maine Chapter

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**Senator Michael Carpenter
Representative Donna Bailey
Members of the Joint Committee on Judiciary
Re:LD 2094 Maine Indian Claims Implementing Act**

February 14, 2020

Dear Chairs Bailey and Carpenter, Members of the Committee,

We write as representatives of Sierra Club Maine's 28,000 members and supporters. Sierra Club is the oldest and largest grassroots environmental organization in the US. The Sierra Club has a long history of standing with indigenous communities in defense of their culture, economy, and health, and the natural ecosystems. We strongly support L.D. 2094 because it provides a realistic collaborative relationship with in the tribes and between the tribes and state of Maine going forward as developed by consensus in the Task Force. The Sierra Club recognizes the importance to the Maine tribes of the "rights, privileges, powers, duties and immunities" to other federally recognized Indian tribes in the US.

By supporting this well-crafted Implementation Act, the legislature will take a large step towards righting long standing inequities imbedded in Maine's laws. There is no permissible reason that the Tribes who resided here prior to contact should be permitted less than equal legal status with other tribes nationwide. Throughout the country states tribes have been able to cultivate economic opportunities because they are not hampered by state rules but work through federal Indian law. And other tribes have been able to access federal funds not available to Maine tribes even though stipulated in the Settlement Act.

This bill will implement the Task Force recommendations on Changes to the Maine Indian Claims Settlement Act supported by this committee and we recommend the committee "ought to pass" today and in both bodies of the legislature.

We urge you to vote for LD 2094. in its entirety to begin rectify long standing wrongs in Maine's legislative history.

Sincerely

**Jonathan Fulford,
Legislative Team**

For more information about Sierra Club's Justice initiatives: <https://www.sierraclub.org/people-and-justice>



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