



TO: The Honorable Anne Carney, Co-Chair  
The Honorable Matt Moonen, Co-Chair  
Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary

DATE: March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023

RE: LD 78: RESOLUTION, Proposing an Amendment to Article X of the Constitution of Maine  
Regarding the Publication of Maine Indian Treaty Obligations

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Good morning Senator Carney and Representative Moonen.

My name is Lane Sturtevant. I'm a resident of Warren. I am submitting testimony on behalf of the League of Women Voters of Maine in support of LD 78, RESOLUTION, Proposing an Amendment to Article X of the Constitution of Maine Regarding the Publication of Maine Indian Treaty Obligations.

The League of Women Voters of Maine is a nonpartisan political organization that has been working for over 100 years to encourage informed and active participation in government, to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and to influence public policy through education and advocacy. We never support or oppose any political party or candidate.

As stated in the [National League of Women Voters' publication of the League's policy positions](#): "The League of Women Voters of the United States believes that democratic government depends upon informed and active participation at all levels of government. The League further believes that governmental bodies must protect the citizen's right to know by giving adequate notice of proposed actions, holding open meetings, and making public records accessible." The publication goes on to say that "transparency is a key tenet of the League."

The League of Women Voters of Maine takes the tenet of transparency seriously. If a democratic government represents the people, serves the people, then the people need to know how they are being represented and served. If governing documents, including statutes, regulations, and constitutions, delineate the scope and obligations of government, then it follows that the people should have easy access to those documents in their entirety.

LD 78 seeks to address one instance in which the state of Maine has not been fully transparent with its people. The fact that the treaty obligations in Article X of the Maine Constitution remain a part of the Constitution but have been redacted and not included in printed copies of the Constitution for almost 150 years means that the people of Maine have not had easy access to the entirety of this central governing document for a long time. This is a lapse in transparency that we can, and should, correct. Passage of LD 78 will mean that the people of the state of Maine will be able to openly know the unpublished wording, as should be their right, and make an effort to fulfill its obligations.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. We hope you will support LD 78.