



# Wabanaki Policy Youth Initiative



“I learned so much as a WPYI delegate. It gave me the opportunity to advocate for policies and helped me find a voice I never realized I had. Through this experience, I was able to step into leadership spaces like the Senate, engage in conversations about rights, and truly feel empowered in my ability to make a difference.”

**-Vera (20), Lewiston**

“As a non-Indigenous person who did not grow up in Maine, I feel a deep responsibility to continually learn, unlearn, and take action in support of Wabanaki rights here in Maine and Indigenous sovereignty everywhere. Through WPYI, I had the opportunity to learn from and alongside others committed to this work—Wabanaki leaders and teachers, community partners, and fellow youth voices.”

**-Ruby (24), Portland**



**The Wabanaki Policy Youth Initiative participates in Wabanaki Alliance Candidate Forums ahead of elections in November.**



**The Wabanaki Policy Youth Initiative announces LD 1474 as their priority bill, alongside LD 785 and LD 395.**

WPYI Youth Leads Mak Thompson (Mi'kmaq) and Ella Bither (Wolastoqey) speak at the Wabanaki Alliance Press Conference on February 3rd.

“My favorite thing about this was learning more about the legislative process and how to make a difference within it. As a young person, it is so intimidating to call legislators or write testimony. Through this program, and learning about things that are going on in my community, and how I can help was so empowering!”

**-Elja (15), Norway**



**WPYI youth testify in support of LD 785 and 395 before the Judiciary Committee.**

Panawahpskek youth lead Carmella Bear testified before the Committee on February 19<sup>th</sup>, “There are over 500 tribes in this country that are examples that this legislation helps tribal communities. Wabanaki tribes deserve to have access to federal Indian law.”