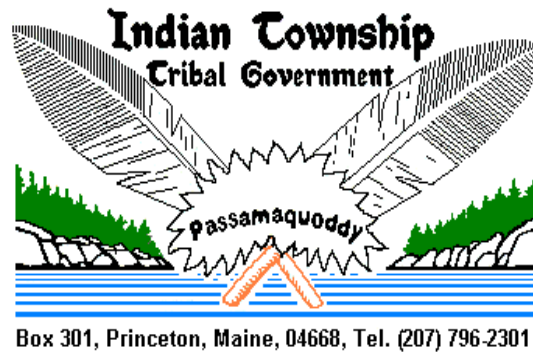


Tribal Chief
William Nicholas

Tribal Vice Chief
Darrell Newell

Tribal Representative
Rena Newell



Tribal Council:

Alexander Nicholas I
Elizabeth Neptune
Joseph Socobasin
Paul Downing
Sonja Dana
Wade Lola I

Testimony by Joseph M. Socobasin
Councilmember and Former Chief of the Passamaquoddy Tribe at Indian Township
To the Committee on Indian Affairs

SCIA Oversight Hearing

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee, my name is Joseph Socobasin. I am a member of the Tribal Council and Former Chief of the Passamaquoddy Tribe of Indian Township. Thank you for inviting me here today to provide testimony regarding the 45th Anniversary of the Native American Programs Act and the establishment of the Administration for Native Americans.

The Passamaquoddy Tribe consists of 3,600 tribal members residing in three distinct self-governing Passamaquoddy communities. We are known as "People of Dawn". Two communities are in Maine, Indian Township and Pleasant Point, and the third is located at St. Andrews, N.B. Each community is separated by geography, but the people continue to maintain political, social and kinship ties. Throughout the history of the Passamaquoddy people, we have lived off the land. One of our Indigenous food gathering methods included harvesting the sweet sap from the Sugar Maple.

In 2013 the Passamaquoddy Tribe created an economic development project to tap into this traditional natural resource; maple syrup. Owning more than 65,000 acres of forested land in Northern Maine, and the predominant tree species being sugar maple, provides us with an abundant renewable resource to harvest.

In September 2013, the Passamaquoddy Tribe was awarded our first ANA Grant for 1.5 million over a period of three years. With this funding, it allowed us to hire and train tribal members to properly install, maintain and operate modern maple equipment. Because of the initial grant, we have been able to obtain three additional grants that has allowed us to expand and improve our production and marketing for Passamaquoddy Maple.

The ANA funding and technical assistance has been critical to the development and success of the Passamaquoddy Tribes economic endeavors. Technical assistance has provided a stable foundation of a sustainable business that has allowed us to bring our indigenous product to a competitive market. Passamaquoddy Maple is organically certified and has expanded beyond maple syrup with a line of sugars and candies. All our products can be viewed online at our website PassamaquoddyMaple.com. As a recipient of an ANA grant, we are grateful for the opportunity to offer testimony and our support. Woliwon

Respectfully submitted.