

# **Sherri Mitchell, Penobscot Indigneous Rights Attorney, Speaks on Jerry Reid Nomination to Head Maine Department of Environmental Protection**

**(recorded by Josh Woodbury, Sunlight Media Collective 1-8-19)**

**Sherri Mitchell: As a citizen of the Penobscot nation, I'm very concerned with the appointment of Jerry Reid to head the Department of Environmental Protection. One of the things that concerns me most is Mr. Reid's willingness to misrepresent fact in order to sway not only public opinion regarding the state of our environment, but also to misrepresent fact, material fact, historical fact in front of the court in order to sway the court's decision regarding a vital waterway not only to the Penobscot people, but to the State of Maine.**

**And so in his role as Assistant Attorney General, Mr. Reid misrepresented material and historical facts to the court. This is not a difference in interpretation of the law that we're talking about. That's standard in the practice of law that there might be discrepancies and interpretation of the law. What we're talking about is blatant purposeful misrepresentation of historical fact.**

**There is a very clear and very accurate historical record of our relationship with the Penobscot River. And in the hearing related to the territorial taking of the Penobscot River, Penobscot Nation v. Mills, Mr. Reid argued before the court that Penobscot people only ever fished from the land. Despite all of the historical record, despite all of the known facts related to our relationship with the River that's been very well documented, well recorded throughout history, he falsely represented to the court that we did not have canoes, that we did not canoe upon the waters of the Penobscot River.**

**When he said that, the judge actually laughed at him. He asked him, "Mr. Reid, are you claiming that the Penobscot people never used boats or canoes on the Penobscot River?" And Jerry Reid said, "Yes, Your Honor, that is what I'm saying."**

**And so he knew that it was a falsehood. He knew that it was an absurd**

**thing to say. Yet he was willing to make that statement to the court as a representative of the Maine Attorney General's Office. To me, this speaks to his character. It speaks to his willingness to be honest. It speaks to his willingness to be dishonest in order to sway not only public opinion, but the court's decision on vital protections related to our waterways. And so for that reason alone, I feel that he is not fit to hold the position as the head of the Department of Environmental Protection.**