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Resolve, To Prevent Domestic Violence and Protect Our Citizens

Preamble. Whereas, the effects of deadly domestic violence and its impact on the State's public health system and social services system are far-reaching; and

Whereas, it is imperative that the State explore adoption of a comprehensive strategy and network to address the many challenges of preventing domestic violence and protecting the State's citizens and communities; now, therefore, be it

Sec. 1 Review of supports and protections. Resolved: That the Domestic Abuse Homicide Review Panel, established in the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 19-A, section 4013, subsection 4 and referred to in this resolve as "the panel," shall undertake a comprehensive review of the measures currently in place to support and protect victims and potential victims of domestic violence. In undertaking this review, the panel shall specifically consider:

- A. The ability of domestic violence advocacy offices in the counties of the State to provide sufficient support, referrals, resources and protection for domestic violence victims given current levels of funding;
- B. The establishment of a program to provide to victims, free of charge, the services of attorneys trained in domestic violence matters;
- C. The assignment of a trained domestic violence law enforcement officer in each county or town;
- D. The feasibility of providing increased funding for safe houses and crisis assistance for victims and their families; and
- E. The feasibility of providing increased funding for free and accessible counseling and support services for victims, including regular funding for support vouchers for child care, housing, education and other needs of victims; and be it further

Sec. 2 Review domestic violence laws. Resolved: That the panel shall undertake a comprehensive review of the provisions of the criminal code related to domestic violence. In undertaking this review, the panel shall specifically consider the need for:

- A. The establishment of a statewide registry of perpetrators of domestic violence;
- B. Increasing penalties and periods of incarceration for convicted perpetrators of domestic violence; and
- C. The imposition of measures on convicted perpetrators of domestic violence such as mandatory counseling, police visits, automatic restraining orders and the use of mandatory monitoring and tracking devices; and be it further

Sec. 3 Report. Resolved: That the panel shall submit a report of its findings, including any necessary implementing legislation, to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over criminal justice and public safety matters no later than December 10, 2008. After receipt and review of the report, the joint standing committee may submit legislation based on the report to the First Regular Session of the 124th Legislature.

SUMMARY

This resolve directs the Domestic Abuse Homicide Review Panel, established in the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 19-A, section 4013, subsection 4, to undertake a comprehensive review of the measures currently in place to support and protect victims and potential victims of domestic violence. In addition, the panel is directed to review the provisions of the criminal code related to domestic violence. The panel is authorized to submit a report of its findings, including any necessary implementing legislation, to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over criminal justice and public safety matters.