

PLEASE NOTE: Legislative Information **cannot** perform research, provide legal advice, or interpret Maine law. For legal assistance, please contact a qualified attorney.

## JOINT RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING PARKINSON'S DISEASE AWARENESS MONTH

**WHEREAS**, Parkinson's disease is estimated to directly affect approximately 7,000 adults and an unknown number of children and their numerous care providers in Maine each day, and Parkinson's disease is not just a disease affecting the elderly; and

**WHEREAS**, each Parkinson's disease patient requires in an average week an estimated 7 caregivers and, therefore, the number of people directly challenged by Parkinson's disease is about 50,000 each week in the State; and

**WHEREAS**, Parkinson's disease symptoms are not understood or well known by the general public, creating distress and danger in the lives of Parkinson's patients, especially in emergency rooms in the State's hospitals; and

**WHEREAS**, there is an urgent need to train, inform and educate public safety personnel, including those in charge of transportation in all of its forms, supervising personnel in State parks and public campgrounds, workers in emergency rooms, ambulance drivers and other emergency workers, police and fire prevention personnel, about Parkinson's disease; and

**WHEREAS**, there is also an urgent need to protect the lives of Parkinson's disease patients by training hospital emergency room personnel in the proper assessment of Parkinson's patients arriving at medical facilities; and

**WHEREAS**, there are only 2 movement disorder neurologists specializing in Parkinson's disease in Maine, which limits access for prospective patients and those 2 are in southern Maine, which is insufficient for the people in the rest of the State, who lack personnel trained in Parkinson's disease care; and

**WHEREAS**, the American Parkinson Disease Association, the Maine Parkinson Society and the MaineHealth Learning Resource Center are all established as a central resource at the Maine Medical Center campus in Falmouth; and

**WHEREAS**, there exists a network of 12 Parkinson's Disease Support Groups statewide: the Capitol area, the Greater Bangor area, the Southern Maine area in Biddeford, the Blue Hill area, Bath-Brunswick, Cape Elizabeth, Camden, Greater Portland, Lewiston, Oxford Hills in Norway, Westbrook and York; and a younger onset group in Brunswick and a Parkinson's Plus support group in South Portland; and

**WHEREAS**, April 11th is known globally as World Parkinson's Awareness Day and April is Parkinson's Awareness Month; now, therefore, be it

That We, the Members of the One Hundred and Twenty-third Legislature now assembled in the First Special Session, on behalf of the people we represent, take this opportunity to

express our support for all efforts being made by the Parkinson's disease community to close the gaps in services, training, education and care that currently exist; and be it further

That suitable copies of this resolution, duly authenticated by the Secretary of State, be transmitted to the Maine Parkinson Society and the Maine Chapter of the American Parkinson Disease Association and the MaineHealth Learning Resource Center.