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JOINT RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING MAY 17, 2011 AS DIABETIC PERIPHERAL NEUROPATHY ALERT DAY

WHEREAS, diabetes is one of the most prevalent and costly chronic diseases in the United States, and it is estimated that 23.6 million Americans, or 7.8% of the population, including approximately 77,000 Maine residents as of 2005, have the disease, a serious illness that has no cure; and

WHEREAS, another 57 million Americans, or one in 5 Americans, have prediabetes, a condition that puts them at greater risk for developing type 2 diabetes, and the prevalence of diabetes in Maine has been steadily rising, with a 50% increase in nongestational diabetes since 1994; and

WHEREAS, Maine has the highest rate of diagnosed nongestational diabetes in New England, and, among 10 other rural states with similar demographics, Maine ranked 2nd only to West Virginia in the prevalence of diagnosed diabetes; and

WHEREAS, diabetes is a leading cause of chronic disease mortality in the United States, and prevention of the disease is achievable only with education and regular medical care, including recommended testing and self-management practices; and

WHEREAS, diabetes can affect anyone, young and old alike, and minority populations have a higher prevalence of diabetes, especially the Hispanic, African-American, Asian and Native American populations, and minority populations in America have an increased risk for developing type 2 diabetes; and

WHEREAS, the American Diabetes Association estimates that about 60% to 70% of people with diabetes have mild to severe forms of nervous system damage due to diabetic peripheral neuropathy, which is a serious condition that damages nerve fibers due to the prolonged exposure to high amounts of glucose in the blood; and

WHEREAS, diabetic peripheral neuropathy sometimes causes intense chronic pain, including aching, tingling, burning and numbness of the feet, although most patients with this neuropathy have no symptoms but lose sensation in the feet and are at increased risk for falls and complications such as foot ulcers; and

WHEREAS, the rate for amputation of limbs in people with diabetes is 10 times higher than for people without diabetes, and in the United States more than 60% of nontraumatic lower limb amputations occur in people with diabetes; and

WHEREAS, diabetic peripheral neuropathy accounts for more diabetes-related hospitalizations than any other complication and many hospitalizations and deaths can be prevented by better management of the disease, including annual foot exams that encompass testing and treatment of diabetic foot issues; and

WHEREAS, in 1999, The Neuropathy Association found that 8.6% of all Medicare recipients had peripheral neuropathy as their primary or secondary diagnosis, with peripheral neuropathy treatment

accounting for approximately 14 million Medicare claims at an approximate cost of \$3.5 billion dollars;
and

WHEREAS, an increase in community awareness of risk factors and symptoms related to diabetes can improve the likelihood that people with diabetes will get the attention they need before suffering devastating irreversible complications; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED: That We, the Members of the One Hundred and Twenty-fifth Legislature now assembled in the First Regular Session, on behalf of the people we represent, take this opportunity to indicate our support for public awareness efforts to inform people of the many dangers posed by diabetes and in particular what steps to take to delay or prevent diabetic peripheral neuropathy; and be it further

RESOLVED: That We, the Members of the One Hundred and Twenty-fifth Legislature recognize that May 17, 2011 is Diabetic Peripheral Neuropathy Alert Day in Maine; and be it further

RESOLVED: That suitable copies of this resolution, duly authenticated by the Secretary of State, be transmitted to the Department of Health and Human Services, the American Diabetes Association's Maine affiliate and The Neuropathy Association.