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JOINT RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING SEPTEMBER 1-7, 2019 AS RESILIENCY WEEK IN MAINE

WHEREAS, natural hazard mitigation is the effort to reduce loss of life and property by lessening the impact of disasters. It is most effective when implemented under a comprehensive, long-term mitigation plan; and

WHEREAS, the Pre-Disaster Mitigation Grant Program, administered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, or FEMA, is designed to assist states and local communities in implementing a sustained pre-disaster natural hazard mitigation program; and

WHEREAS, the recently enacted federal Disaster Recovery Reform Act of 2018 makes money available for states and communities to undertake pre-disaster mitigation measures and creates new incentives for states to implement measures to improve the disaster resilience of buildings; and

WHEREAS, since 1908, natural disasters have cost the country more than one trillion dollars; and

WHEREAS, climate change has increased the probability of extreme weather and thereby natural disasters; and

WHEREAS, disasters and increased disaster recovery times affect local and state economies in lost payrolls and lost sales and income tax; and

WHEREAS, according to a FEMA-commissioned study conducted by the National Institute of Building Sciences, every \$1 spent on natural hazard mitigation provides the nation with \$6 in future benefits; and

WHEREAS, 25% of small businesses that are impacted by a natural disaster never reopen their doors; and

WHEREAS, September is National Preparedness Month, an occasion to recognize the need for all Americans to prepare for a disaster and plan for recovery after a disaster; and

WHEREAS, natural hazard mitigation planning is a key process used to break the cycle of disaster damage, reconstruction and repeated damage; and

WHEREAS, effective pre-disaster mitigation reduces the demand for relief services on volunteer organizations, such as disaster rescue and recovery teams, along with food banks and homeless shelters that serve our communities by changing their operations to provide additional services to those affected by disaster; and

WHEREAS, the development of awareness throughout Maine of the need to improve building resiliency and develop long-range mitigation strategies for protecting people and property from future disasters is essential to the future of our economic growth, health and well-being; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED: That We, the Members of the One Hundred and Twenty-ninth Legislature now assembled in the First Regular Session, on behalf of the people we represent, take this opportunity to declare the week of September 1-7, 2019 as Resiliency Week in Maine to raise public awareness about the continuing need to plan for future disasters by instituting a pre-disaster natural hazard mitigation strategy, and we honor the brave men and women who, as first responders, selflessly provide aid in a disaster to safeguard Maine citizens.