

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD

TWO THOUSAND TWENTY-ONE

**JOINT RESOLUTION URGING THE CONGRESS OF THE
UNITED STATES TO PASS LEGISLATION ESTABLISHING A
VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATION FOR HOUSING**

WE, your Memorialists, the Members of the One Hundred and Thirtieth Legislature of the State of Maine now assembled in the First Special Session, most respectfully present and petition the Congress of the United States, as follows:

WHEREAS, from the beginning of time, towns, hamlets, kingdoms and countries have needed to have a body of people willing to put their own lives on the line to provide defense; and

WHEREAS, these people by serving have earned a variety of benefits from grateful communities, from medieval knights being granted land to veterans being granted health care and pensions today; and

WHEREAS, in 1789 the first Congress of the United States assumed the responsibility of providing payments to veterans; and

WHEREAS, the United States Government has historically provided bounty land to its war veterans; and

WHEREAS, the United States Department of Veterans Affairs home loan program was created in 1944 as part of the Servicemen's Readjustment Act, better known as the GI Bill of Rights, and signed into law by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in order to help veterans return to civilian life; and

WHEREAS, many veterans are not aware of or able to access benefits that they have earned because of complex program requirements or eligibility; and

WHEREAS, the need for advocates for veterans not connected with the United States Department of Veterans Affairs generated the creation of veterans service organizations, which have historically served as essential advocates for veterans as veterans work to understand the benefits they have earned and are entitled to use; and

WHEREAS, the only veterans benefit that does not have a specifically chartered veterans service organization is housing; and

WHEREAS, according to the National Alliance to End Homelessness, on a single night in January 2020, 37,252 United States veterans were homeless; and

WHEREAS, safe, adequate housing is essential for veterans and their families to achieve their highest potential as thriving members of thriving communities; and

WHEREAS, veterans' understanding and ability to access United States Department of Veterans Affairs housing benefits require strong, independent advocacy; and

WHEREAS, a veterans service organization specifically focused on housing would provide that advocacy; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED: That We, your Memorialists, respectfully urge and request that the Congress of the United States ensure the creation and approval of a congressionally chartered veterans service organization for housing during the 117th Congress; and be it further

RESOLVED: That suitable copies of this resolution, duly authenticated by the Secretary of State, be transmitted to each Member of the Maine Congressional Delegation and to each Member of the United States Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs and the United States House Committee on Veterans' Affairs.