

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD

TWO THOUSAND TWENTY-FIVE

**JOINT RESOLUTION HONORING THE ROLE OF IRISH
IMMIGRANTS AND IRISH-AMERICANS IN THE AMERICAN
WAR OF INDEPENDENCE**

WHEREAS, in April 1775 at Lexington and Concord, Massachusetts, the American War of Independence began with "the shot heard round the world," which continues to echo to this day. That war 250 years ago inspired Ireland and others in many nations to continue to struggle to be free and to choose their own destinies; and

WHEREAS, just a month later in May 1775, Maurice O'Brien of Cork in Ireland and his 5 sons struck the first blow against the British at sea. The O'Briens and a group of local fishermen in Machias Bay, Maine captured the HMS Margareta in a bold boarding action. When 2 more British warships were sent to reclaim the prize, the O'Briens and their neighbors captured them as well; and

WHEREAS, if the fights at Lexington and Concord were where the American nation was born, it was on June 17, 1775 at the Battle of Bunker Hill that the young American nation came of age; and

WHEREAS, at the heart of this fierce clash were the Fighting Irish and the names of Casey, Collins, Flynn and McGrath were among the names of the fallen. Among the New England militia who rushed to defend Boston Harbor were 176 Irish-born patriots and hundreds more who were children of Irish immigrants, many of whom had arrived as indentured servants; and

WHEREAS, seven Irish officers and dozens of Irish-American officers at Bunker Hill, including Colonel John Stark of New Hampshire, were among the heroes of the day, and among those who paid the ultimate price was Major Andrew McClary, born in County Tyrone, Ireland, who fought valiantly until his tragic death at the very end of the battle. McClary, the highest-ranking American officer killed that day, was the last to leave the battlefield; and

WHEREAS, another figure of Irish descent who played a key role in the revolution was Captain Ebenezer Sullivan. His brothers James and John went on to leave their mark on American history as well: James became governor of Massachusetts and John was a general who forced British troops to evacuate Boston, Massachusetts on St. Patrick's Day in 1776; and

WHEREAS, in December 1775, John Barry from County Wexford, Ireland, later known as the Father of the American Navy, was given command of the USS Lexington, the first commission issued by the Continental Congress. He would go on to receive Commodore Commission Number One from President George Washington; and

WHEREAS, the Battle of Bunker Hill and the shots fired at Lexington and Concord inspired Ireland to continue its struggle for independence, and its freedom and its peace were secured with the steadfast support of the United States of America; now, therefore be it

RESOLVED: That We, the Members of the One Hundred Thirty-second Legislature now assembled in the First Regular Session, pause in our deliberations to honor the role of Irish immigrants and Irish-Americans in the American War of Independence.