

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD

TWO THOUSAND TWENTY-FOUR

**JOINT RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING MAY 2024 AS MENTAL
HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH**

WHEREAS, the mental health and well-being of all children, youth, adults and families in the State are of fundamental importance to the Legislature; and

WHEREAS, since 1999, the national suicide rate has increased more than 36%, with more than 13.2 million individuals experiencing suicidal thoughts and 1.6 million individuals attempting suicide annually in the United States; and

WHEREAS, over 49,000 people died by suicide in 2022, which is about one death every 11 minutes; and

WHEREAS, suicide, opioid misuse and addiction and children's mental health issues are areas of concern in the State; and

WHEREAS, there are approximately 61,000 adults in the State who are living with a serious mental illness, including, but not limited to, bipolar disorder, severe depression and schizophrenia, and 14,000 children 12 to 17 years of age in the State have depression; and

WHEREAS, over 260,000 people in the State live in a community that does not have enough mental health professionals; and

WHEREAS, the effective treatment of mental health conditions is critical to reducing the number of individuals and families who find themselves in mental health crises, to breaking individual and generational cycles of mental illness and to promoting healing; and

WHEREAS, recovery from a mental illness requires access to professional services and involves families and caregivers as allies in recovery and as critical members of the care delivery team; and

WHEREAS, maintaining an open dialogue regarding mental health conditions encourages individuals struggling with mental illness to seek help and is an essential component to fighting the stigma associated with mental illness; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED: That We, the Members of the One Hundred and Thirty-first Legislature now assembled in the Second Regular Session, on behalf of the people we represent, take this opportunity to recognize May 2024 as Mental Health Awareness Month in order to raise awareness of mental health conditions and services and to break the stigma surrounding mental illness in the State.