

PLEASE NOTE: Legislative Information **cannot** perform research, provide legal advice, or interpret Maine law. For legal assistance, please contact a qualified attorney.

## **JOINT RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING MARCH 11TH TO MARCH 17TH, 2007 AS SLEEP DISORDER AWARENESS WEEK**

**WHEREAS**, the field of sleep disorders has taken on increased interest in recent years, among both doctors and patients, since sleep plays an extremely important role in people's everyday lives, affecting physical health, emotional well-being, mental abilities, productivity and performance; and

**WHEREAS**, recent studies associate lack of sleep with serious health problems, including increased risk of depression, obesity, cardiovascular disease and diabetes; and

**WHEREAS**, sleep disorders are more prevalent in the United States today than at any other time in this country's history, with nearly half of Americans experiencing problems with sleeping; and

**WHEREAS**, the National Institutes of Health estimates that sleep disorders cost \$15,000,000,000 in health care expenses and \$50,000,000,000 in lost productivity annually; and

**WHEREAS**, due to advances in the science of sleep medicine, help is available for those who suffer from both common and rare sleep disorders, 81 of which are recognized by the American Academy of Sleep Medicine; and

**WHEREAS**, insomnia is a classification of sleep disorders that causes a person to have difficulty falling or staying asleep or to wake up too early and is suffered by 30% of the United States population; and

**WHEREAS**, a person with insomnia may feel tired during the day, have trouble concentrating at work or fall asleep during the day; and

**WHEREAS**, for most people, insomnia lasts only a few days and goes away without treatment, but stress or depression can cause a higher level of insomnia that may last for several weeks and may not go away on its own; and

**WHEREAS**, sleep apnea is a sleep-related breathing disorder that causes a person's body to stop breathing during sleep, the most common type of sleep apnea being obstructive sleep apnea; and

**WHEREAS**, obstructive sleep apnea occurs when the tissue in the back of the throat collapses and blocks the airway, which prevents air from getting into the lungs; this is a serious medical disorder that afflicts an estimated 15,000,000 to 20,000,000 Americans as well as millions more who remain undiagnosed and untreated; and

**WHEREAS**, while the effects of sleep apnea, including daytime sleepiness, decreased alertness and trouble concentrating as well as increased risk of stroke, diabetes and heart disease, are real and severe, there are safe and effective treatments available for those who have sleep apnea; and

**WHEREAS**, some people with sleep apnea may benefit from surgery, although scientific evidence suggests that continuous positive airway pressure is the best treatment for sleep apnea. Continuous positive airway pressure provides a steady stream of pressurized air to patients through a mask

HP0940, item 1, 123rd Maine State Legislature  
JOINT RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING MARCH 11TH TO MARCH  
17TH, 2007 AS SLEEP DISORDER AWARENESS WEEK

that they wear during sleep, which keeps the airway open, preventing pauses in breathing and restoring normal oxygen levels; and

**WHEREAS,** restless leg syndrome causes an unpleasant prickling or tingling in the legs, particularly in the calves, that creates a need to stretch or move the legs to rid the sufferer of these uncomfortable or painful sensations; and

**WHEREAS,** restless leg syndrome makes it very difficult for a person to rest or fall asleep, so much so that the total sleep time a sufferer gets is lower than with almost any other sleep disorder; and

**WHEREAS,** many people endure the suffering associated with sleep disorders for many years before seeking medical attention, which delays their treatment and their recovery; now, therefore, be it

That We, the Members of the One Hundred and Twenty-third Legislature, now assembled in the First Regular Session, on behalf of the people we represent, take this opportunity to establish the week of March 11th to March 17th, 2007 as Sleep Disorder Awareness Week and we recommend and urge citizens, health agencies, schools and other suitable organizations and groups to be aware of the seriousness of sleep disorders and we recommend and urge all people affected to consult with professionals.