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JOINT RESOLUTION TO HONOR THE DAYS OF REMEMBRANCE

WHEREAS, the Holocaust was the state-sponsored, systematic persecution and annihilation of European Jewry by Nazi Germany and its collaborators between 1933 and 1945, by means of concentration camps, extermination camps, ghettos, firing squads and starvation and using every arm of the Nazi bureaucracy; and

WHEREAS, although Jews were the primary victims, with 6,000,000 murdered, millions more people, including Romani people and Poles, as well as people with handicaps who did not measure up to Aryan perfection, were also targeted for destruction or decimation for racial, ethnic or national reasons; and

WHEREAS, many specific groups, including homosexuals, Jehovah's Witnesses, Soviet prisoners of war and political dissidents, also suffered grievous oppression and death under Nazi tyranny; and

WHEREAS, the history of the Holocaust offers an opportunity to reflect on the moral responsibilities of individuals, societies and governments whether at peace or at war; and

WHEREAS, the people of the State should always remember the terrible events of the Holocaust and remain vigilant against hatred, persecution and tyranny so that such horrors are never repeated; and

WHEREAS, the people of the State should actively rededicate ourselves to the principles of individual freedom in a just society; and

WHEREAS, the Days of Remembrance have been set aside for the people of the State to remember the victims of the Holocaust as well as to reflect on the need for respect of all peoples; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to an Act of Congress, the United States Holocaust Memorial Council is responsible to designate the Days of Remembrance of the victims of the Holocaust, and this year's commemoration is April 19, 2009 to April 26, 2009, including the Day of Remembrance, known as Yom Hashoah, on April 21, 2009; and

WHEREAS, it is appropriate for the people of the State to join in this international commemoration; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED: That We, the Members of the One Hundred and Twenty-fourth Legislature now assembled in the First Regular Session, on behalf of the people we represent, pause in solemn memory of the victims of the Holocaust and express our common desire to continually strive to overcome prejudice and inhumanity through education, vigilance and resistance; and be it further

RESOLVED: That suitable copies of this resolution, duly authenticated by the Secretary of State, be transmitted to the Holocaust and Human Rights Center of Maine and the United States Holocaust Memorial Council in Washington, D.C., on behalf of the people of the State.