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JOINT RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING MAINE ADULT EDUCATION

WHEREAS, since 1871 Maine's public schools have supported the development of an adult education system that has grown and adapted to meet the needs of people throughout the State; and

WHEREAS, Maine's adult education programs are uniquely positioned to provide adults with the opportunity to learn where they live in all parts of Maine, with services in 85% of municipalities; and

WHEREAS, adult education programs are vital to the economic development of Maine and are actively responding to the current crisis of job loss by providing programs and courses specifically designed to help educate the workforce and prepare Maine adults for success, including:

1. Direct service to Maine adults who have experienced job loss, with enrollment increases in academic and job-related courses of between 30% and 100% in 2008;
2. Career preparation and courses for Maine workers, plus certificate programs, including the implementation of the WorkReady™ program focusing on workforce development skills for success on the job;
3. Literacy and English as a second language programs and successful family literacy programs combining adult education and early childhood and parenting instruction;
4. High school completion and general educational development programs, with 3,000 credentials awarded in Maine annually, with a major emphasis on individuals under the age of 25;
5. Comprehensive college transition programs in place in 22 regions covering every county in Maine, which provide career guidance, orientation to college and refresher and prerequisite classes for adults seeking college success; and
6. Community education, including a vibrant array of self-supporting courses contributing to the quality of life in Maine communities, offering the opportunity for Mainers of all ages to share talents and learn from others; and

WHEREAS, in 2009 Maine Adult Education launched a web portal system of coordinated websites for local programs allowing statewide searching for courses and online registration and payment; now therefore, be it

RESOLVED: That We, the Members of the One Hundred and Twenty-fourth Legislature now assembled in the Second Regular Session, on behalf of the people we represent, pause to acknowledge and express our appreciation and strong support of Maine's adult education programs, which uniquely meet the needs of the communities they serve and provide a vital system of service to the population of the State as new challenges are faced in this period of economic uncertainty; and be it further

RESOLVED: That a suitable copy of this resolution, duly authenticated by the Secretary of State, be transmitted to the Department of Education.