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**JOINT RESOLUTION MEMORIALIZING THE UNITED
STATES CONGRESS TO INCREASE FLEXIBILITY
REGARDING PAYMENTS TO MAINE VETERANS' HOMES**

WE, your Memorialists, the Members of the One Hundred and Twenty-fourth Legislature of the State of Maine now assembled in the Second Regular Session, most respectfully present and petition the United States Congress as follows:

WHEREAS, the federal Veterans Benefits, Health Care, and Information Technology Act of 2006, Public Law 109-461, requires the United States Department of Veterans Affairs to reimburse Maine Veterans' Homes at a higher rate for the cost of care provided to veterans with a 70% or higher service-connected condition or who require nursing home care for a service-connected reason; and

WHEREAS, the 70 Percent Program was set up to give equal access to veterans with service-connected disabilities who use Maine Veterans' Homes in Augusta, Scarborough, Caribou, Bangor, South Paris and Machias, Maine; and

WHEREAS, although the intent of the United States Department of Veterans Affairs regulations is to provide a higher per diem rate for veterans with service-connected disabilities, the regulations actually result in significantly lower total amounts being paid to many Maine Veterans' Homes providing nursing home care to veterans with service-connected disabilities; and

WHEREAS, as implemented, the 70 Percent Program does not provide to many Maine Veterans' Homes the actual cost of care for disabled veterans in these homes, despite congressional intent; and

WHEREAS, the continued financial viability of many state veterans' homes systems across the nation is threatened, including the Maine Veterans' Homes; and

WHEREAS, the threat to the continued financial viability of state veterans' homes is particularly acute in the 30 states that have Medicare-certified or Medicaid-certified state veterans' homes, including Maine, and that receive payments for the care of veterans with service-connected disabilities under such programs; and

WHEREAS, several states have refrained from admitting some veterans with service-connected disabilities to state veterans' homes; and

WHEREAS, although the new United States Department of Veterans Affairs per diem program is viable for some states providing nursing home care and domiciliary care to veterans with service-connected disabilities, it is highly problematic for states providing skilled nursing home care to veterans with service-connected disabilities in Medicaid-certified and Medicare-certified state veterans' homes; and

WHEREAS, legislation to rectify this problem is before Congress in H.R. 4241, which would allow for increased flexibility in payments for state veterans' homes; now, therefore, be it

HP1320, , 124th Maine State Legislature
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RESOLVED: That We, your Memorialists, on behalf of the people we represent, take this opportunity to urge the United States Congress to support and pass H.R. 4241; and be it further

RESOLVED: That suitable copies of this resolution, duly authenticated by the Secretary of State, be transmitted to the President of the United States Senate, to the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives and to each Member of the Maine Congressional Delegation.