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JOINT RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING SUNSHINE WEEK, MARCH 12-18, 2017

WHEREAS, James Madison, generally regarded as the father of our federal Constitution, wrote that "a people who mean to be their own Governors, must arm themselves with the power which knowledge gives"; and

WHEREAS, every citizen in our participatory democracy has an inherent right of access to government meetings and public records; and

WHEREAS, an open and accessible government is vital to establishing and maintaining the people's trust and confidence in their government and in the government's ability to effectively serve its citizens; and

WHEREAS, we celebrate open government and recognize its importance in developing how people who believe in democracy think about transparency and its role in government, leading to the adoption of our own Freedom of Access Act; and

WHEREAS, the protection of every person's right of access to public records and government meetings is a high priority for the State of Maine; and

WHEREAS, Sunshine Week was established to spark a discussion about the importance of open government and public access to government documents and meetings; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED: That We, the Members of the One Hundred and Twenty-eighth Legislature now assembled in the First Regular Session, on behalf of the people we represent, take this opportunity to recognize Sunshine Week during the week of March 12-18, 2017 and confirm the basic principles of an open and accessible government in a free society and urge all citizens to join in this observance.