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JOINT RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING APRIL 2017 AS CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT PREVENTION MONTH

WHEREAS, our children are our most valuable resource and will shape the future of the State; and

WHEREAS, in fiscal year 2015, 3,247 Maine children were victims of substantiated child abuse or neglect; and

WHEREAS, child abuse and neglect is a serious problem affecting every segment of our communities and our State, and finding solutions requires input and action from everyone in all our communities; and

WHEREAS, child abuse and neglect can have long-term psychological, emotional and physical effects that can have lifelong consequences for victims; and

WHEREAS, "protective factors" are conditions that reduce or eliminate risk in families and communities and promote the social, emotional and developmental well-being of children and families; and

WHEREAS, effective child abuse prevention activities succeed because of the meaningful connections and partnerships created between child welfare, education, health, community-based and faith-based organizations and businesses and law enforcement agencies; and

WHEREAS, communities must make every effort to promote programs and activities that benefit children and their families; and

WHEREAS, we acknowledge that we must work together as a state to increase awareness about child abuse and neglect and contribute to promoting the social and emotional well-being of children and families in a safe, stable and nurturing environment; and

WHEREAS, prevention remains the best defense for our children and families; 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 April 2017 as Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Month.