

STATE OF MAINE

—
**IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD
TWO THOUSAND AND FIFTEEN**
—

**JOINT RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING ACCESS TO JUSTICE DAY
PRESENTED BY MAINE'S JUSTICE ACTION GROUP**

WHEREAS, 2015 marks the 20th anniversary of Maine's Justice Action Group, a judge-led coalition of leaders from Maine's legal community who are passionate about helping all Maine people have access to civil justice; and

WHEREAS, the coalition members include representatives of the state and federal judiciary, the Legislature, nonprofit civil legal aid providers, the University of Maine School of Law, the Maine Bar Foundation, the Maine State Bar Association, the Maine Trial Lawyers Association, private practice attorneys and others; and

WHEREAS, key initiator Judge Frank Coffin described the Justice Action Group as a catalyst, something introduced in small quantities that produces great change, and the Justice Action Group has been an advocate for equal access to justice since 1995; and

WHEREAS, equal access to justice is a bedrock principle of a free, constitutional society, but no system of laws and constitutional protections can be effective if only those who can afford a private practice attorney have access to justice; and

WHEREAS, providing equal access to justice has tangible, widespread benefits for Maine's families, children, schools, communities, businesses, charities and government; and

WHEREAS, legal issues profoundly affect basic human needs such as shelter, sustenance, safety from violence, health and child protection; and

WHEREAS, the need for civil legal aid and pro bono representation for low-income and vulnerable Maine people remains acute; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED: That We, the Members of the One Hundred and Twenty-seventh Legislature now assembled in the First Regular Session, on behalf of the people we represent, pause on this 2015 Access to Justice Day to acknowledge and express our appreciation and strong support for Maine's civil legal aid providers and private practice attorneys who provide pro bono services for those otherwise unable to afford legal representation; and be it further

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