

**STATE OF MAINE**

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

**JOINT RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING THE AMERICAN LEGION  
ON THE 97TH ANNIVERSARY OF ITS BEING CHARTERED BY  
THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS**

**WHEREAS**, on March 15, 1919, members of the American Expeditionary Forces gathered in Paris, France to form a new servicemen's organization and, in St. Louis, Missouri the following May, soldiers who had returned from Europe approved the organization's draft preamble and constitution and name, the American Legion; and

**WHEREAS**, the United States Congress chartered the American Legion on September 16, 1919 as a patriotic veterans organization focusing on service to veterans and service members and their communities; and

**WHEREAS**, the American Legion has evolved into one of the most influential nonprofit groups in the United States, with over 2,400,000 members in 14,000 posts nationwide; and

**WHEREAS**, on August 9, 1921, the American Legion's efforts resulted in the creation of the United States Veterans Bureau, forerunner of today's Department of Veterans Affairs, and the American Legion continues to lobby for adequate funding to cover medical, disability, education and other benefits for veterans; and

**WHEREAS**, on December 15, 1943, Past National Commander Harry W. Colmery began writing the first draft of what became the G.I. Bill of Rights and, on June 22, 1944, after the passionate advocacy of Past National Commander Harry W. Colmery and National Commander Warren Atherton, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed into law the original G.I. Bill, ushering in monumental changes to society in the United States, including access to higher education and improvements in housing for veterans across the nation; and

**WHEREAS**, the American Legion urges a full accounting of all prisoners of war and troops missing in action in Vietnam and has formed a special group from among the nation's major veterans organizations to continue pressing for further resolution of this issue; and

**WHEREAS**, the American Legion at its first convention passed a resolution to support the Boy Scouts of America and today is the chartering agency for more than 1,700 scouting units with approximately 64,000 youths; and

**WHEREAS**, the American Legion runs annual civic training events for high school juniors called Boys State and Boys Nation and offers numerous programs, including American Legion baseball, scouting, oratorical contests, junior shooting sports, Sons of the American Legion and American Legion Riders, and offers scholarships at every level of the organization; now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED:** That We, the Members of the One Hundred and Twenty-seventh Legislature now assembled in the Second Regular Session, on behalf of the people we represent, take this

opportunity to recognize the American Legion on its 97th anniversary and the contributions of its members to their communities and the State; and be it further

**RESOLVED:** That suitable copies of this resolution, duly authenticated by the Secretary of State, be transmitted to the headquarters of the American Legion, Department of Maine.