

STATE OF MAINE

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

**JOINT RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING THE JUSTICE ACTION
GROUP'S ACCESS TO JUSTICE DAY**

WHEREAS, the Justice Action Group is a coalition established in 1995 to provide leadership and coordination in planning for the provision of civil legal aid to low-income and elderly Mainers; and

WHEREAS, equal access to justice is a bedrock principle of a free, constitutional society and no system of laws and constitutional protections can be credible or effective if only those who can afford a private lawyer may avail themselves of it; and

WHEREAS, providing equal access to justice has tangible, widespread benefits for Maine's families, children, schools, communities, businesses, charities and government, and the availability of legal aid has been shown to be effective in reducing the incidence of domestic violence by ensuring that victims receive court protection orders; and

WHEREAS, Maine's employers benefit when employees who receive legal assistance miss less work and are less distracted by unresolved legal issues; and

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

WHEREAS, in the current economic downturn, the need for legal aid and pro bono representation in Maine remains acute; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED: That We, the Members of the One Hundred and Twenty-fifth Legislature now assembled in the Second Regular Session, on behalf of the people we represent, pause to acknowledge and express our appreciation and strong support for Maine's legal aid provider organizations and Maine's private practice attorneys who provide pro bono service for those otherwise unable to afford legal representation on the Justice Action Group's 2012 Access to Justice Day; 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.