

**STATE OF MAINE**

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**IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD**

**TWO THOUSAND TWENTY-FOUR**

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**JOINT RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING FEBRUARY 29, 2024 AS  
ACCESS TO JUSTICE DAY**

**WHEREAS**, 2024 marks the 29th anniversary of the founding of the Justice Action Group, a judge-led coalition of leaders from Maine's legal community who are passionate about ensuring that all Maine people have access to civil justice; and

**WHEREAS**, the Justice Action Group's 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 Justice 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 private advocates have access to justice; and

**WHEREAS**, because justice for all is achievable only through the vigilance and action of the legislative, judicial and executive branches of government, it is important to provide for access to justice in all branches of State Government; 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 safety from violence and exploitation, security and stability for children and the families in which they are nurtured, health, shelter and food security; and

**WHEREAS**, the need for increased support 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 Thirty-first Legislature now assembled in the Second Regular Session, on behalf of the people we represent, take this opportunity to declare February 29, 2024 as Access to Justice Day to acknowledge and express our appreciation and strong support for the Justice Action Group and all 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.