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## JOINT RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING FRANCO-AMERICAN DAY

**WHEREAS**, the State of Maine is named after the Province of Maine in France and the towns of Paris and Calais owe their names to the capital city of France and the French port city of Calais, respectively; and

**WHEREAS**, more than 1/3 of the population of Maine is of French and Canadian descent. Franco-Americans in Maine have contributed much to the beauty and quality of this State; and

**WHEREAS**, French is the primary language of thousands of Mainers and there has been a resurgence in the use of the French language and a heightened appreciation of the Franco-American heritage throughout the State; and

**WHEREAS**, clubs and organizations to promote French culture and language have sprung up throughout the State, including the Francophone Caucus at the Capitol; and

**WHEREAS**, fluent French-English bilingual people are a cultural and economic resource to the State of Maine; and

**WHEREAS**, cultural tourism can be greatly enhanced by the genuine Franco-American centers throughout the State and the large Franco-American presence in Maine can further strengthen our relationships with Canada, France and the rest of the francophone world; and

**WHEREAS**, the first Franco-American Day was celebrated on Wednesday, March 6, 2002 at the State Capitol; now, therefore, be it

That We, the members of the One Hundred and Twenty-third Legislature now assembled in the First Regular Session, on behalf of the people we represent, proclaim that Wednesday, March 21, 2007 is Franco-American Day, to be celebrated at the State Capitol; and be it further

That Franco-American Day be celebrated to commemorate the rich history of the French people in the State of Maine and the United States of America.