

**STATE OF MAINE**

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**IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD  
TWO THOUSAND AND ELEVEN**

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**JOINT RESOLUTION MEMORIALIZING THE  
PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES AND THE  
UNITED STATES CONGRESS TO AWARD THE  
DESIGNATION OF "VETERANS OF THE UNITED  
STATES AND THE STATE OF MAINE" TO THE  
PROTECTORS AND DEFENDERS OF THE  
NORTHEASTERN BOUNDARY DURING THE  
AROOSTOOK WAR**

**WE**, your Memorialists, the Members of the One Hundred and Twenty-fifth Legislature of the State of Maine now assembled in the First Regular Session, most respectfully present and petition the President of the United States and the United States Congress as follows:

**WHEREAS**, there was an undeclared confrontation in 1839 that lasted until 1842 between the United States and Great Britain over the international boundary between British North America, specifically the provinces of Quebec and New Brunswick in Canada, and Maine, referred to as the Aroostook War; and

**WHEREAS**, this confrontation had its origins at the end of the Revolutionary War because the Treaty of Paris of 1783 did not clearly determine the boundary between British North America and the United States and, during the War of 1812, British forces occupied most of eastern Maine, including Washington County, Hancock County and parts of Penobscot County, intending to permanently annex the region into Canada; and

**WHEREAS**, the Treaty of Ghent ended the war in 1814 and reestablished the boundary but left the border ambiguities intact, and when Maine separated from Massachusetts in 1820 as a new state, the status and location of the border emerged as a chief concern, with Massachusetts also retaining some interests in the land as part of the statehood agreement; and

**WHEREAS**, the dispute continued into the next decade as the area became more and more settled and the wealth of the lumber and land became apparent to both sides of the border, and in 1839 the Maine Legislature authorized newly elected Governor John Fairfield to send land agents and militia to the border; and

**WHEREAS**, high tensions and heated rhetoric in New Brunswick led both sides to raise troops and arm them and march them to the disputed border, but eventually negotiations between diplomats from Great Britain and United States Secretary of State Daniel Webster resulted in the Webster-Ashburton Treaty of 1842; and

**WHEREAS**, this dispute involved no actual confrontation between military forces, but 10 to 12 companies of more than a thousand men as well as drafted militia were sent to Aroostook County; and

**WHEREAS**, the men who were the protectors and defenders of the northeastern boundary of the United States and Maine and Massachusetts primarily were volunteers in service to the State of Maine, members of the Maine State Militia, members of a drafted militia and civilian suppliers, support personnel and settlers in the Aroostook Valley; and

**WHEREAS**, as Governor Israel Washburn, who was Governor of Maine during the Civil War, stated long after the dispute was settled, "The Aroostook war . . . forms a chapter in the history of the State which does real honor to its border chivalry"; now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED:** That We, your Memorialists, respectfully urge and request that the United States Congress award the designation of "Veterans of the United States and the State of Maine" to those who protected and defended the northeastern boundary and who served between February 5, 1839 and December 31, 1842 and who were willing to risk their lives; and be it further

**RESOLVED:** That suitable copies of this resolution, duly authenticated by the Secretary of State, be transmitted to the Honorable Barack H. Obama, President of the United States, the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives and to each Member of the Maine Congressional Delegation.