State of Maine

Proclamation

WHEREAS, developmental disabilities affect more than 7 million Americans and their families; and

WHEREAS, there are approximately 25,000 Mainers living with one or more developmental disabilities; and

WHEREAS, disability is a natural part of the human experience that does not diminish the right of individuals with developmental disabilities to achieve optimum independence, to exert control and choice over their own lives, and to fully participate in and contribute to their communities; and

WHEREAS, the ability of people with developmental disabilities to fulfill their aspirations and contribute in meaningful ways as respected members of their communities is limited only by the opportunities afforded to them; and

WHEREAS, the Maine Developmental Disabilities Council is the Maine entity charged under federal law to advocate for positive systems changes that allow persons with developmental disabilities to achieve optimum independence and to promote innovative programs and practices that improve the quality of life for children and adults with developmental disabilities and their families; and

WHEREAS, the Maine Developmental Disabilities Council was established in December, 1971, and has been involved for the last forty years in public awareness, educational and advocacy initiatives with the goal that children and adults with developmental disabilities will be fully included in their local communities, and have equal opportunities for self-determination, gainful employment and pursuit of individual interests and goals; and

WHEREAS, we must increase our efforts to assure that persons with developmental disabilities have the same opportunities to explore and develop their abilities, pursue meaningful and productive lives, and contribute to their families, community, state and nation; and

WHEREAS, public awareness and education enhance a community's understanding of the issues affecting persons with developmental disabilities; and

WHEREAS, the Maine Developmental Disabilities Council, the Maine Disability Rights Center, the state self-advocates' organization, Speaking Up for Us, and other statewide organizations of family members, advocates and supporters of persons with developmental disabilities are involved in public awareness, educational, and advocacy initiatives; and

WHEREAS, the Maine Developmental Disabilities Council, Speaking Up For Us, the Maine Disability Rights Center join together with other statewide and community organizations to recognize March as Persons with Developmental Disabilities Month.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Paul R. LePage, do hereby proclaim March, 2012 as

DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES AWARENESS MONTH

throughout the State of Maine, and urge all citizens to fully support these efforts of persons with developmental disabilities to live full and productive lives of inclusion in our communities.

In testimony whereof, I have caused
the Great Seal of the State to be
hereunto affixed GIVEN under my hand
at Augusta this Fifteenth day of March,
Two Thousand Twelve.

Paul R. LePage
Governor

Charles E. Summers, Jr.
Secretary of State
TRUE ATTESTED COPY