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**JOINT RESOLUTION DESIGNATING JANUARY 6,
2011 AS INFANT AND TODDLER AWARENESS DAY**

WHEREAS, 14,000 children are born in Maine annually and all parents want their children to grow to be happy, healthy and well educated; and

WHEREAS, young children need positive relationships, rich learning opportunities and safe environments; and

WHEREAS, early experiences determine whether a child's brain architecture will provide a strong or weak foundation for all future learning, behavior and health; and

WHEREAS, the majority of the brain development essential for later academic success is defined by the time a child is 5 years of age; and

WHEREAS, positive experiences for children prior to entering school lead to better results than do remediation programs at a later age; and

WHEREAS, research shows that high-quality early learning programs cut later crime and improve educational outcomes and that children who attend high-quality early learning programs are less likely to commit crimes when they grow up; and

WHEREAS, research also shows that children in high-quality early learning programs learn to get along better with others and follow directions, which may reduce problem behavior that can lead to youth and adult crime; and

WHEREAS, high-quality early learning programs also show strong results for children in improving language and math skills, reducing grade retention and increasing graduation rates and this school success can lead graduates of high-quality early learning programs to have higher rates of employment and earnings; and

WHEREAS, the Maine Children's Growth Council and the Children's Cabinet are dedicated to improving the efficacy of the early childhood education system in Maine; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED: That We, the Members of the One Hundred and Twenty-fifth Legislature now assembled in the First Regular Session, on behalf of the people we represent, take this opportunity to recognize that January 6, 2011 is Infant and Toddler Awareness Day in the State in order to acknowledge the importance of proper early childhood development for our infants and toddlers.