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Resolve, To Coordinate Stakeholders To Review Best Practices in the Management of Strangulation and Determine Methods To Address the Issue in Maine

Emergency preamble. Whereas, acts and resolves of the Legislature do not become effective until 90 days after adjournment unless enacted as emergencies; and

Whereas, there is a national increased awareness of the severity of strangulation, including its high prevalence in domestic and sexual assaults, its serious impacts, including life-threatening levels of anoxic brain damage, and its use as a tool of intimidation; and

Whereas, public and professional awareness of the prevalence and impact of strangulation in Maine may lag behind research data; and

Whereas, stakeholders should promptly review best practices models and tailor them to fit Maine's needs; and

Whereas, in the judgment of the Legislature, these facts create an emergency within the meaning of the Constitution of Maine and require the following legislation as immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and safety; now, therefore, be it

Sec. 1 Review of best practices in management of strangulation. Resolved: That the Maine Commission on Domestic and Sexual Abuse, created in the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 19#A, section 4013 and referred to in this resolve as "the commission," shall study strangulation to determine the presence and patterns of strangulation in domestic and sexual violence in the State and the current management of strangulation within criminal law. The commission shall review model practices and research in other states, including the impacts of other states' legislation, public awareness activities and changes in policy. The commission shall invite interested parties, including but not limited to representatives from state and local law enforcement, prosecutors, the judicial branch, the Criminal Law Advisory Commission under Title 17#A, section 1351, the Maine Coalition to End Domestic Violence, the Maine Coalition Against Sexual Assault, first responders and other emergency care providers; and be it further

Sec. 2 Report. Resolved: That the commission shall submit a report by February 15, 2012 to the Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety. The report must include the commission's findings and recommendations regarding methods to deal with strangulation in the State, including, as it determines necessary, proposed legislation; proposed education and training for law enforcement, prosecutors and the judiciary; and proposed programs and outreach for public awareness and advocacy. Upon receipt of the commission's report and recommendations, the committee may report out legislation to the Second Regular Session of the 125th Legislature.

Emergency clause. In view of the emergency cited in the preamble, this legislation takes effect when approved.