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Legislative Document

No. 702

H.P. 441

House of Representatives, February 25, 2025

An Act to Designate January 6th as A Day to Remember and to Preserve the Accounts of Witnesses to the Events of January 6, 2021

Received by the Clerk of the House on February 20, 2025. Referred to the Committee on State and Local Government pursuant to Joint Rule 308.2 and ordered printed pursuant to Joint Rule 401.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "R B. Hunt".

ROBERT B. HUNT
Clerk

Presented by Representative MACIAS of Topsham.
Cosponsored by Representatives: ARCHER of Saco, BELL of Yarmouth, BRIDGEO of Augusta, ROLLINS of Augusta, TERRY of Gorham.

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:

Sec. 1. 1 MRSA §150-V is enacted to read:

§150-V. A Day to Remember

January 6th of each year is designated as A Day to Remember, and the Governor shall annually issue a proclamation honoring the resilience of democracy during the events of January 6, 2021 in Washington, D.C., encouraging the people of the State to use the day as an opportunity for reflection on the values of democracy, civic responsibility and the importance of protecting constitutional governance and encouraging educational institutions, civic organizations and public libraries to observe the day with discussions, events and programming to educate citizens about the importance of civic engagement and the rule of law.

Sec. 2. 5 MRSA §95-C, sub-§3 is enacted to read:

3. Collection of witness accounts from January 6, 2021. The State Archivist, in collaboration with the Maine Historical Society, shall collect and preserve firsthand accounts from individuals who witnessed or were involved in the events of January 6, 2021 in Washington, D.C., including, but not limited to:

A. The State's congressional delegation and the congressional delegation's staff who were present in Washington, D.C. on January 6, 2021;

B. Residents of the State who were at the United States Capitol Building in Washington, D.C. on January 6, 2021 or who played a role in responding to the events of that day; and

C. Law enforcement personnel, historians and other individuals whose accounts provide insight into the significance of the events of January 6, 2021.

The State Archivist shall develop a standardized process for conducting interviews under this subsection that ensures the respectful and accurate documentation of participants experiences and shall record and transcribe all interviews, with participants' consent, for inclusion in the Maine State Archives. The State Archivist shall collaborate with schools, universities and civic organizations to create informational materials based on the interviews for integration into educational initiatives and shall make all recorded and transcribed interviews and materials accessible to the public through an online archive and physical exhibits.

Beginning January 6, 2026, the State Archivist shall provide an annual report to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over education and cultural affairs detailing the progress of the witness account collection and educational initiatives under this subsection.

SUMMARY

This bill establishes January 6th of each year as A Day to Remember to honor the resilience of democracy during the events of January 6, 2021 in Washington, D.C. It also directs the State Archivist to collect and preserve firsthand accounts from the State's congressional delegation and staff and others connected to the events of January 6, 2021, to create educational materials based on those accounts and to make those materials and accounts available to the public through an online archive and physical exhibits.