



Legislation Text

File #: 80585, **Version:** 1

Fiscal Note

No fiscal impact.

Title

Declaring November 20, 2023 to be Transgender Day of Remembrance.

Body

WHEREAS, transgender and gender non-conforming folks are valued members of the City of Madison; and,

WHEREAS, the ongoing, growing epidemic of violence committed against transgender and gender non-conforming people continues to climb and claim the lives of too many each year; and,

WHEREAS, from 2017 to 2021 the number of homicides of transgender people increased by 93%; and,

WHEREAS, transgender women of color are disproportionately victims of such violence, as 73% of these tracked homicides between 2017 and 2021 were Black trans women; and,

WHEREAS, many more incidences of murder and violence against transgender people go unreported, sometimes due to misgendering the victim; and,

WHEREAS, Felicia Melton-Smyth, a transgender woman from Madison, was murdered while on vacation in Mexico in May of 2008; and,

WHEREAS, Felicia was a dedicated activist in the Madison LGBTQIA+ community and was a fundraiser for the Madison AIDS Network and other charities; and,

WHEREAS, Felicia worked in the billing department for the University of Wisconsin Medical Foundation and during her nights and weekends was a part-time employee at Shamrock Bar & Grille, where she was known for her smile, jokes, and an annual holiday fundraiser that raised money for gifts for people with HIV/AIDS; and,

WHEREAS, the 2015 U.S. Transgender Survey, the largest survey of transgender people in the United States to date, found that 81.7% of respondents reported seriously thinking about suicide in their lifetimes and 40.4% reported attempting suicide at some point in their lifetimes; and,

WHEREAS, transgender youth report fewer depressive symptoms and less suicidal ideation and behavior when they are able to use their chosen names in multiple contexts, are validated, and are supported by friends, family, and the wider community; and,

WHEREAS, Skylar Marcus Lee, a 16-year-old transgender boy from Madison, took his own life in September of 2015; and,

WHEREAS, Skylar was described as an influential youth leader at Madison's Gay Straight Alliance for Safe Schools who had a gift for addressing "why racial justice and LGBTQ justice need to be a part of the same conversation to truly be successful;" and,

WHEREAS, Skylar was an active member of both Madison's Proud Theatre and Madison West's Gay Straight Alliance, loved ballroom dancing, and was said to have an infectious kindness; and,

WHEREAS, every year we honor November 20 as Transgender Day of Remembrance, a day meant to honor, commemorate, and memorialize those who face discrimination and stigma across the nation; and,

WHEREAS, this day focuses on the persistent struggles transgender people face in their everyday lives and how others can share their love, support, and hope;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City of Madison declares November 20, 2023 to be Transgender Day of Remembrance.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City of Madison remembers and honors the lives of Felicia Melton-Smyth, Skylar Marcus Lee, and the many other transgender and gender non-conforming community members that have passed over the years.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the City of Madison commits itself to supporting transgender and gender-nonconforming residents of Madison and encourages all residents of Madison to resist hate and discrimination.