

STATE OF MAINE

—
IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD

TWO THOUSAND TWENTY-THREE

—
**JOINT RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING JUNE 2023 AS PRIDE
MONTH**

WHEREAS, the Stonewall riots that began on June 28, 1969 sparked the LGBTQ rights movement in the United States; and

WHEREAS, during these riots, LGBTQ citizens, led by transgender women of color, rose up and resisted police harassment that arose out of discriminatory criminal laws that have since been declared unconstitutional; and

WHEREAS, in the decades since the Stonewall riots, Pride celebrations have taken place around the country every June to commemorate this historic turning point for the LGBTQ community; and

WHEREAS, following the 1984 murder of Charlie Howard, a young gay man in Bangor, LGBTQ Mainers came together to form the Maine Lesbian/Gay Political Alliance, now known as EqualityMaine; and

WHEREAS, in 1993, the Maine Civil Rights Act was amended to include explicit protections for LGBTQ people, ensuring the law served to protect against bias-based threats, harms and hate crimes; and

WHEREAS, as a national leader for LGBTQ equality, Maine has included protections for LGBTQ people in parentage and antibullying laws; and

WHEREAS, Maine has continued to improve access to relationship equality, passing laws that extend hospital visitation rights to same-sex couples in 1999, require health insurance companies to offer to employers coverage for domestic partnerships in 2001, extend inheritance rights and next of kin status for funeral and burial arrangements and conservator rights to same-sex and unmarried heterosexual couples in 2004 and include domestic partnerships in the law governing family medical leave in 2007; and

WHEREAS, the people of Maine voted to prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity in 2005 and in favor of marriage equality in 2012; and

WHEREAS, in 2014, Maine was the first state in the nation whose highest court ruled it unlawful for a school district to prohibit a transgender student from accessing the bathroom consistent with that student's gender identity, interpreting for the first time amendments to the Maine Human Rights Act that expanded protections to include sexual orientation; and

WHEREAS, since 2018, Maine has added a nonbinary gender designation for state identification cards and birth certificates, prohibited transgender exclusions in health insurance plans, banned the harmful practice of conversion therapy and secured state-level benefits for veterans who were discharged from the military due to their sexual orientation or gender identity; and

WHEREAS, despite years of progress, members of the LGBTQ community in the United States and around the world still face discrimination, violence and proposed rollbacks in state and federal protections, and bias-based crimes based on sexual orientation and gender identity are on the rise; and

WHEREAS, here in Maine there is a commitment to protecting the civil rights of LGBTQ Mainers and to treating all people fairly and equally and with dignity and respect; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED: That We, the Members of the One Hundred and Thirty-first Legislature now assembled in the First Special Session, on behalf of the people we represent, take this opportunity to recognize June 2023 as Pride Month as we continue to work toward full equality for our LGBTQ family, friends and neighbors.