

## Legislation Text

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Commemorating National Coming Out Day on October 11th, 2023 in the City of Philadelphia.

WHEREAS, National Coming Out Day is an annual celebration that encourages and supports LGBTQIA+ individuals in coming out, telling their stories, fighting for their rights, and sharing their authentic selves; and

WHEREAS, On October 11th 1987, half a million people joined the March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights, the second such demonstration on the capital. This movement led to the founding of national LGBTQIA+ organizations, which spearheaded the inauguration of National Coming Out Day in 1988. By 1990, National Coming Out Day was observed in all 50 states and merged its efforts with the Human Rights Campaign. Today, National Coming Out Day continues to promote a safe world for LGBTQIA+ individuals to live truthfully and openly; and

WHEREAS, Coming out is a unique and often daunting experience for every LGBTQIA+ person. Many come out multiple separate times: to friends, family, colleagues, and acquaintances. For some, coming out may be a simple matter of correcting assumptions. For others, coming out is still a terrifying and dangerous challenge that can be met with discrimination, bullying, ostracization, judgment, or violence. National Coming Out Day provides an opportunity for us all to strengthen our community, support each other, and help LGBTQIA+ individuals be safely open with those closest to them; and

WHEREAS, National Coming Out Day is not a day to pressure anyone to come out or to shame those who have yet to come out. It is a day to celebrate the beauty of being true to yourself, having the courage to share your experiences, and supporting others who may choose to come out to you. It is also a day to acknowledge the difficulties many face in coming out, to understand that there is no single way to come out, to recognize that still not all can safely come out, and to respect that some may choose never to come out; and

WHEREAS, While National Coming Out Day is primarily a celebration of pride and authentic self expression, it is also a call to solidarity against the current state of emergency facing LGBTQIA+ communities across the country. Over the past year, there has been an unprecedented and dangerous spike of legislative assaults on LGBTQIA+ rights sweeping state legislatures. Extremist groups with long histories of oppressing the existence and rights of LGBTQIA+ people are weaponizing public policy against them. These attacks threaten the significant progress that has been made for LGBTQIA+ communities since the inauguration of National Coming Out Day in 1987; and

WHEREAS, As of August, more than 580 anti-LGBTQIA+ bills have been introduced by state legislatures, including over 220 bills specifically targeting transgender and non-binary people. Of these 580, over 80 have been signed into law this year alone. This more than doubles last year's number, which was already the worst year on record; and

WHEREAS, Of the over 80 bills passed, 15 ban gender affirming care for transgender youth, 7 require or allow misgendering of transgender students, 2 target drag performances, 3 create a license to discriminate, and 4 censor school curricula, including books; and

WHEREAS, Alongside legislative attacks, LGBTQIA+ communities throughout the country face increasing incidents of hate and violence. As elected officials and hate groups fill media channels with anti-LGBTQIA+ rhetoric, people are emboldened to commit atrocities against LGBTQIA+ individuals; and

WHEREAS, The City of Philadelphia stands proudly with our LGBTQIA+ community against legislative attacks, hate, and violence. We also recognize and commend the strength, courage, and resilience of our Philadelphia LGBTQIA+ community in fighting for justice and safety throughout the country; and

WHEREAS, This year on October 6th through 8th, the Philadelphia community celebrates National Coming Out Day with OURfest: National Coming Out Parade and Festival/Resource Fair, the first National Coming Out Parade in the United States. OURFest stands for Our Uniting Resilience and is organized by Philly Pride 365, a program of Galaei. OURFest was created to amplify the resilience of the LGBTQIA+ community, each individual journey in coming out, and how we all hold and take up space everyday. Through this event, we reinvest in the implicit but crucial resource of uniting, being together, and building solidarity in community; and

WHEREAS, OURFest is an opportunity to show the world that what unites us is our love for each other and our stand to build a better world; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, THAT THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, Commemorates National Coming Out Day on October 11th, 2023 in the City of Philadelphia.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to Tyrell Brown, Executive Director of galaei, representing this legislative body's support for and commemoration of National Coming Out Day.