

RESOLUTION NO. _____

A RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF MIAMI BEACH, FLORIDA, EXPRESSING DISAPPOINTMENT WITH THE MIAMI-DADE SCHOOL BOARD'S FAILURE TO RECOGNIZE OCTOBER, 2022 AS LGBTQ HISTORY MONTH; URGING PARENTS OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY STUDENTS TO USE THE SCHOOL BOARD'S FAILURE TO ACT AS OPPORTUNITY TO ENGAGE WITH THEIR CHILDREN AND ADDRESS LGBTQ ISSUES AND HISTORY IN A POSITIVE LIGHT; URGING PARENT-TEACHER ASSOCIATIONS AND/OR ORGANIZATIONS TO ADOPT THE ATTACHED SAMPLE RESOLUTION DECLARING OCTOBER, 2022 AS LGBTQ HISTORY MONTH; URGING PRINCIPALS OF INDIVIDUAL SCHOOLS WITHIN MIAMI-DADE COUNTY TO RECOGNIZE OCTOBER, 2022 AS LGBTQ HISTORY MONTH WITHIN THEIR SCHOOLS AND TO ACKNOWLEDGE AND TEACH LGBTQ HISTORY IN THEIR SCHOOLS, TO THE FULLEST EXTENT PERMITTED BY LAW; AND FURTHER, DIRECTING THE CITY ADMINISTRATION TO PUBLISH ON THE CITY'S WEBSITE THE ATTACHED SAMPLE RESOLUTION DECLARING OCTOBER, 2022 AS LGBTQ HISTORY MONTH SO THAT IT MAY BE DOWNLOADED AND ADOPTED BY STUDENT BODIES, CLUBS, OR OTHER STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS WISHING TO HONOR AND RECOGNIZE LGBTQ HISTORY.

WHEREAS, LGBTQ History Month, founded in 1994 by Missouri high-school history teacher Rodney Wilson, is an annual month-long observance of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender history, and the history of the gay rights and related civil rights movements; and

WHEREAS, the month of October was selected to coincide with National Coming Out Day (October 11), which was already established, and the anniversary of the first march on Washington for gay and lesbian rights in 1979; and

WHEREAS, the LGBTQ History Month is meant to highlight and celebrate the history and achievements of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people; and

WHEREAS, on September 7, 2022, the Miami-Dade School Board (the "School Board") considered a proposal sponsored by School Board member Lucia Baez Geller, to recognize October as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer ("LGBTQ") History Month, and teach 12th graders about two landmark Supreme Court cases impacting the LGBTQ communities; and

WHEREAS, despite School Board member Lucia Baez Geller's efforts on behalf of the LGBTQ community, the School Board voted 8-1 to strike down the proposal; and

WHEREAS, the School Board recognizes heritage or history months throughout the school year to teach students about history, whether it be about Hispanic heritage, Black history or women's history; and

WHEREAS, in 2021, the School Board overwhelmingly voted to recognize October as National LGBTQ History Month; and

WHEREAS, the School Board's latest nearly unanimous 8-1 vote against recognizing October as LGBTQ History Month is a shameful step backwards, and an alarming bellwether of rising anti-LGBTQ rhetoric that has swept Florida since the passage of the controversial "Parental Rights in Education" law, most commonly known as the "Don't Say Gay", earlier this year; and

WHEREAS, the School Board refused to follow its own precedent in recognizing October as LGBTQ History Month by citing concern over violating the “Don’t Say Gay” bill, despite the Board’s own lawyer opining that the recognition was on solid legal footing; and

WHEREAS, in bowing down to the pressure of fringe groups such as the Proud Boys and County Citizens Defending Freedom, who were present at the meeting and made public comments laced with anti-LGBTQ rhetoric against the recognition, the School Board inadvertently created a piece of LGBTQ History itself, but found itself on the wrong side of it; and

WHEREAS, a study conducted by San Diego State University surveyed thousands of youth across the nation and found that 1% of kids ages 9-10 identify as gay, bisexual, or transgender, which is a significant percentage because the age group is so young; and

WHEREAS, researchers from the Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States surveyed college students who identify as gay and bisexual and found that 48% of gay and bisexual college students knew their sexual preferences in high school; and

WHEREAS, many of LGBTQ student suffer teasing, bullying, harassment, violence and internalized oppression that can lead to academic consequences, risky behavior and even suicide; and

WHEREAS, LGBTQ youth face unique challenges and recent studies show that during 2021 alone, 42% of LGBTQ youth seriously considered attempting suicide in the past year; and

WHEREAS, the Trevor Project estimates that at least one LGBTQ youth between the ages of 13–24 attempts suicide every 45 seconds in the U.S.; and

WHEREAS, respectful, positive treatment and discussions on gender and sexuality helps LGBTQ students feel safe, seen, valued, and respected, and decreases the educational, mental, and physical harms that they experience; and

WHEREAS, the School Board’s refusal to recognize October as LGBTQ History Month sent a chilling message to LGBTQ youth that their sexuality and identity are something that must be hidden, prohibited, and not celebrated; and

WHEREAS, the City of Miami Beach is a diverse and inclusive community and has demonstrated a long history of opposing discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity, among other categories; and

WHEREAS, as stated in the City’s Human Rights Ordinance, “prejudice, intolerance, bigotry and discrimination and disorder occasioned thereby threaten the rights and proper privileges of its inhabitants and menace the very institutions, foundations and bedrock of a free, democratic society;” and

WHEREAS, although the School Board failed to uphold its responsibility to genuinely care about the wellbeing of all students in Miami-Dade County, our community may still lead by example; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and City Commission of Miami Beach therefore urge parents of students enrolled in Miami-Dade County schools to use the School Board’s failure to act as an opportunity to engage with their children and address LGBTQ issues and history in a positive light; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and City Commission further urge Parent-Teacher Associations and/or organizations to adopt the attached sample Resolution declaring October, 2022 as LGBTQ history month; and

WHEREAS, and furthermore, the Mayor and City Commission urge principals of individual schools within Miami-Dade County to recognize October, 2022 as LGBTQ History Month, and to acknowledge and teach LGBTQ history in their schools, to the fullest extent permitted by law..

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT DULY RESOLVED BY THE MAYOR AND CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF MIAMI BEACH, FLORIDA, that the Mayor and City Commission hereby:

- (1) express disappointment with the Miami-Dade School Board's (the "School Board") failure to recognize October, 2022 as LGBTQ History Month;
- (2) urge parents of Miami-Dade County students to use the School Board's failure to act as opportunity to engage with their children and address LGBTQ issues and history in a positive light;
- (3) urge Parent-Teacher Associations and/or organizations to adopt the attached sample Resolution declaring October, 2022 as LGBTQ History Month;
- (4) urge principals of individual schools within Miami-Dade County to recognize October, 2022 as LGBTQ History Month, and to acknowledge and teach LGBTQ history within their schools, to the fullest extent permitted by law; and
- (5) direct the City Administration to publish on the City's website the attached sample Resolution declaring October, 2022 as LGBTQ History Month so that it may be downloaded and adopted by student bodies, clubs, or other student organizations wishing to honor and recognize LGBTQ history.

PASSED AND ADOPTED this ____ day of _____, 2022.

Attest:

Dan Gelber, Mayor

Rafael E. Granado, City Clerk

(Sponsored by Vice-Mayor Alex J. Fernandez)

APPROVED AS TO
FORM & LANGUAGE
& FOR EXECUTION

Miguel D. Lopez 9/9/2022
For City Attorney Date