

Resolution in Support of Safeguarding Transgender Bodily Autonomy and Gender-Affirming Care

WHEREAS: Dozens of state legislatures and municipal governments across the country have filed legislation or signed laws that attack the rights, existence, and bodily autonomy of transgender people; and

WHEREAS: More than 58,000 trans youth are at risk of losing or have lost access to gender-affirming healthcare across 15 states in the past two years, according to one study; and

WHEREAS: The attack on gender-affirming health care for trans people, particularly trans youth, has had a devastating impact on the lives of members of the LGBTQIA+ community; and

WHEREAS: Gender-affirming care can have measurable and immeasurable positive effects on the health, safety, and well-being of trans youth; and

WHEREAS: Transphobic laws create hostile environments for LGBTQIA+ youth, adults, and families that correlate with higher rates of mental illness and hopelessness; and

WHEREAS: The majority of genderqueer Somerville Middle and High School students have experienced depression as well as a disproportionately high rate of self-harm and suicidal ideation within the past year compared to their peers, according to a 2021 health study; and

WHEREAS: Studies have found that when transgender children are supported in their gender identity by their family and community, their rates of depression and anxiety significantly decrease to rates comparable to cisgender children (Olson 2016); and

WHEREAS: Laws that protect and affirm the humanity, dignity, gender identity, and bodily autonomy of members of the LGBTQIA+ community create supportive environments that correlate with their well-being and survival; and

WHEREAS: Massachusetts has played a historic role in the fight for legal recognition of LGBTQIA+ rights; and

WHEREAS: This Council has a responsibility to respect, protect, and celebrate the lives of LGBTQIA+ people, particularly amidst a national assault on transgender people and their families, and on bodily autonomy generally; **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT**

RESOLVED: That this Council move swiftly to pass protections for transgender people seeking gender-affirming healthcare through the passage of An Ordinance Securing The Rights of Individuals Seeking Gender Affirming Care; **AND BE IT FURTHER**

RESOLVED: That the Administration will invest substantial resources into the well-being and survival of LGBTQIA+ people in Somerville, particularly transgender and genderqueer people, and support LGBTQIA+ residents in Somerville; **AND BE IT FURTHER**

RESOLVED: That this Council advocates for the approval of Senate Budget Amendment 388, which amends Massachusetts General Law to declare the right to access reproductive and gender-affirming healthcare as the law and public policy of the Commonwealth; **AND BE IT FURTHER**

RESOLVED: That the Commonwealth allocate funds to support individuals, families, and communities that are persecuted in pursuit of accessing or providing gender-affirming care.