



**BEFORE THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
FOR STATE OF OREGON, FOR THE COUNTY OF BENTON**

In the Matter of Proclaiming)
June 2024 as 2SLGBTQI+ Pride Month) **PROCLAMATION P2024-014**
In Benton County)

This June, jurisdictions around the world are celebrating their Two-Spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer, and intersex (2SLGBTQI+) community members in what is commonly known as Pride Month. We recognize there are sexual orientations, romantic orientations, gender identities, and sexes that may be included under the 2SLGBTQI+ term and others not reflected here, including but not limited to: questioning, asexual/ace, pansexual, nonbinary, genderqueer, and other gender ethnic minority groups.

Pride Month was established in response to years of organizing efforts led by trans people of color, drag queens, and other 2SLGBTQI+ activists, following the Compton’s Cafeteria Riot in 1966 in San Francisco, Stonewall Uprising in 1969 in New York City, and other efforts across the nation to resist the oppressive laws and social restrictions that threatened the safety and wellbeing of their communities.

Over the past 54 years, Pride has become a celebration of community, perseverance, and survival worldwide. Pride embraces artistic expression through multiple mediums: visual art, poetry, spoken word, drag performances, and many more. Pride helps people explore their gender identities and sexual orientations and allows straight and cisgender allies to express support and solidarity.

2SLGBTQI+ people have always been part of our community, but they have not always had support or safety to be out. 2SLGBTQI+ people have been subject to persecution and sterilization since long before the Civil Rights Era, and in 1952 the American Psychiatric Association listed homosexuality and gender diversity in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM) as a mental disorder. During this time, intersex infants and children began to be subject to social and surgical interventions, a practice that is ongoing.

Many Benton County community members face legislative actions and measures meant to undermine the autonomy of 2SLGBTQI+ people and make them second-class citizens. In 1992, Oregon’s Ballot Measure 9 tried to legalize discrimination against 2SLGBTQI+ community members and prevent all public entities, including educational institutions, from supporting 2SLGBTQI+ groups. Organizations such as the Corvallis Lesbian Avengers fought back against Ballot Measure 9 and it was defeated; however, community members near Corvallis were subject to violence. On September 26th that same year, two Salem residents, Hattie Mae Cohens and Brian Mock, were killed in a firebombing attack. Hattie Mae Cohens was a Black lesbian and Brian Mock was gay. The 2SLGBTQI+ community saw this attack as being motivated by homophobia, encouraged by advocates of Ballot Measure 9. Four individuals who were identified as white supremacists were arrested in connections with the killings. More recently, in 2021, three men were arrested and charged with assault in connection to an attack on a transgender woman at a local convenience store in Corvallis.

Benton County has a history of supporting the 2SLGBTQI+ community. Corvallis and Oregon State University have been home to formal organizations since 1976, allowing individuals to find a sense of home and comfort. In 2004, Oregon’s Ballot Measure 36 passed defining marriage as a union of one man and one woman. Because of this, Benton County officials halted all marriage licenses at this time, including those for one man and one woman. Linda Modrell, a Benton County Commissioner at the time, indicated that they would not hand out any marriage licenses until everyone was treated equally. It wasn’t until 2014 when this

measure was declared unconstitutional by a U.S. federal district court judge, who stated that this violated the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment of the United States.

Legislation has and continues to harm the 2SLGBTQI+ community, especially transgender and nonbinary youth, and intersex babies and children. Ongoing efforts led by community organizers, 2SLGBTQI+ artists, and students have helped to transform Corvallis into a cultural hub for regional drag performers, political activists, and policy advocates across the state. Local organizations and groups have continued building community resilience for 2SLGBTQI+ community members. A few of those groups and organizations are Intersection Parent Connection, a parent group for parents of kids in the queer community, Mid Willamette Transgender Support Network, Oregon State University Pride Center, Out 'N' About youth support group for 2SLGBTQI+ teenagers, Rainbow in the Clouds, a local group that holds a monthly queer dance party, Pride Corvallis, and Philomath Pride Collective.

Pride Month is a time to reflect upon our history, support 2SLGBTQI+ communities, celebrate our identities, and make our communities welcome for all sexual orientations, gender identities, romantic orientations, and sexes. While we celebrate the lives of 2SLGBTQI+ community members, we must also be committed to saving their lives. Benton County is proud to offer gender-affirming care to patients, is committed to equity for all, and supports everyone honoring their sexual orientations, gender identities, romantic orientations, and sexes during Pride Month and every day of the year.

THEREFORE, let it be proclaimed that June is 2SLGBTQI+ Pride Month in Benton County and all community members are invited to celebrate.



Adopted this 4th day of June, 2024.

Signed this 4th day of June, 2024.

BENTON COUNTY BOARD OF
COMMISSIONERS

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Xanthippe Augerot, Chair

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Nancy Wyse", written over a horizontal line.

Nancy Wyse, Vice Chair

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Pat Malone", written over a horizontal line.

Pat Malone, Commissioner