RESOLUTION NO. 23-____

RESOLUTION REAFFIRMING SUPPORT OF ASHEVILLE'S LGBTQIA+ COMMUNITY

WHEREAS, Asheville is committed to interwoven equity for all residents, has passed an LGBTQIA+-inclusive Non-Discrimination Ordinance, and established a Human Relations Commission; and

WHEREAS, hate crimes targeting LGBTQIA+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, & queer) people have increased every year for the past four years; and mass shootings by domestic terrorists at LGBTQIA+ gathering spaces such as Club Q and Pulse have created fear and trauma in LGBTQIA+ communities across the country; and

WHEREAS, events celebrating the existence, success and achievement of Asheville's LGBTQIA+ community are often subject to harassment and disruption by a very small population;

WHEREAS, there has been a sharp increase in anti-LGBTQIA+ legislation in the US, with 474 anti-LGBTQIA+ bills filed in state legislatures across the country as of May of 2023 - representing a significant and nationwide attack on the rights of LGBTQIA+ people; and

WHEREAS, the City of Asheville understands that certain legislative initiatives would have a significantly detrimental impact on the rights of LGBTQIA+ people in our community. Specific examples of concern include the following:

- Legislation that would explicitly prohibit Asheville's educators from using "locally developed curriculum" which reflects our community's values and provides accurate information about the existence, experiences, and history of all our residents, including our LGBTQIA+ neighbors;
- Legislation that would unfairly restrict the ability of Asheville's transgender and gender-nonconforming youth to equally participate in "interscholastic or intramural athletic activities" by creating new "biological participation requirements" based on new interpretations of sex and gender;
- Legislation that would limit the ability of Asheville's residents to access medical care, especially reproductive healthcare and gender-affirming healthcare, by reducing access to funding and criminalizing procedures.

WHEREAS, access to safe, affirming spaces and gender-affirming healthcare is critical for the mental and physical health of LGBTQIA+ people and teens in particular, who are four times more likely to consider suicide than their cisgender and heterosexual peers.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ASHEVILLE THAT:

The Asheville City Council hereby reaffirms support of Asheville's LGBTQIA+ community, and that we celebrate LGBTQIA+ culture as part of the vibrancy of our city including, but not limited to, Pride celebrations, drag performances and LGBTQIA+ inclusion in every aspect of civic life, and that we condemn all violence, hatred, and discrimination against LGBTQIA+ people; LGBTQIA+ spaces, and LGBTQIA+ events; that we stand in opposition to all legislation that erodes the safety, health, civil rights, and/or bodily autonomy of LGBTQIA+ people; and that we will commit to using all of the tools at our disposal to shield our residents from the harmful impacts of such legislation.

Read, approved and adopted this 13th day of June, 2023

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City Clerk Mayor

Approved as to form:

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City Attorney