

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. RES. 508

Honoring the struggle, sacrifice, and triumph of the LGBTQ+ movement
in Georgia.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 13, 2023

Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia (for himself, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mrs. MCBATH, Ms. WILLIAMS of Georgia, Ms. TLAIB, and Mr. BISHOP of Georgia) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

RESOLUTION

Honoring the struggle, sacrifice, and triumph of the
LGBTQ+ movement in Georgia.

Whereas LGBTQ+ individuals in Georgia have historically encountered bigotry, discrimination, hatred, and violence, but have struggled tirelessly to obtain equal rights and protection of the law;

Whereas, in 1833, the Georgia General Assembly codified a prohibition on same-sex relations, threatening LGBTQ+ individuals with harsh punishment for expressing their love;

Whereas, in 1953, 20 gay men were arrested in a sting operation at the Atlanta Public Library, continuing a pattern

of targeted action by members of law enforcement against the gay community;

Whereas, in 1969, Atlanta police initiated a raid on a movie theater known to be frequented by gay individuals;

Whereas such events inspired young generations of gay Georgians to rally in a public manner to promote their cause to end discrimination and guarantee equality;

Whereas, in 1971, the inaugural Atlanta Gay Pride Parade was organized by the Georgia Gay Liberation Front, providing an outlet for the LGBTQ+ community to openly display their pride and embrace of gay culture;

Whereas, in 1972, the first Metropolitan Community Church, an LGBTQ+-affirming Protestant denomination, opened in Atlanta;

Whereas, in 1972, then-Atlanta Mayor Sam Massell appointed Charlie St. John as the city's first LGBTQ+ liaison to the city government as part of the Community Relations Commission;

Whereas, in 1974, activist Bill Smith founded the Atlanta Barb, Georgia's first newspaper dedicated to covering the LGBTQ+ community;

Whereas, in 1976, the Atlanta Gay Center, a community organization that provided direct support and resources to the LGBTQ+ community, was founded and opened;

Whereas, in 1978, a bigoted, antigay rally in Georgia drew a crowd of 4,000 people;

Whereas, in 1979, thousands of Georgians joined in the first national March on Washington for gay rights;

Whereas, by 1981, the HIV/AIDS crisis had come to the forefront of national attention partly due to the work of

the Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta to study and treat the disease;

Whereas, in 1983, AID Atlanta was formed as an educational and service organization to educate people on the realities of the HIV/AIDS epidemic and provide support for those suffering from the disease;

Whereas, throughout the epidemic, gay individuals in Georgia faced large-scale discrimination and bigotry;

Whereas, in 1983, the Atlanta Campaign for Human Rights was founded, the legacy of that organization is now carried on by Georgia Equality, with a mission to “advance fairness, safety, and opportunities for LGBTQ+ communities” across the State;

Whereas, in 1984, the Atlanta city government declared the city’s first “Gay and Lesbian Civil Rights Day”;

Whereas, in 1985, Congregation Bet Haverim opened as Georgia’s first LGBTQ+ welcoming synagogue, to serve the expansive interests of the State’s LGBTQ+ Jewish community;

Whereas, in 1986, a challenge to Georgia’s repressive laws criminalizing same-sex relations in *Bowers v. Hardwick* reached the Supreme Court;

Whereas, in 1988, *Southern Voice*, an LGBTQ+ newspaper dedicated to serving the community through breaking news and thoughtful analysis, was founded in Atlanta;

Whereas, in 1988, then-Mayor Maynard Jackson became the first Atlanta mayor to attend an LGBTQ+ pride event;

Whereas the 1990s saw a rapid influx of LGBTQ+ individuals into Atlanta in search of acceptance, understanding, diversity, and equality;

Whereas, in 1997, a domestic terrorist injured five people by bombing the Otherside Lounge, a lesbian bar in Atlanta;

Whereas, in 1997, Cathy Woolard became the first openly gay individual elected in Georgia, as a member of the Atlanta City Council;

Whereas, in 1998, the Georgia Supreme Court struck down State law prohibiting same-sex relations as unconstitutional;

Whereas, in 2003, Fulton County became the first county in the State to recognize domestic benefits for residents in same-sex unions;

Whereas, in 2015, the Supreme Court decided in *Obergefell v. Hodges* that same-sex marriage should be legal and recognized across the country, representing a massive victory for LGBTQ+ Americans nationwide;

Whereas Georgia is home to an estimated 425,000 individuals identifying as members of the LGBTQ+ community;

Whereas public opinion polls find that a majority of Georgia residents support same-sex marriage and support implementing antidiscrimination laws based on sexual orientation; and

Whereas there are currently no Georgia State laws to protect against LGBTQ+ discrimination in family services, housing, banking, public accommodations, health care, and education: Now, therefore, be it

- 1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—
- 2 (1) honors the struggle, sacrifice, and triumph
- 3 of LGBTQ+ individuals in Georgia;

1 (2) recognizes the historical significance that
2 Georgia has played in the LGBTQ+ movement; and

3 (3) recognizes that further work is necessary to
4 guarantee equality and liberty for all LGBTQ+ in-
5 dividuals both in Georgia and the United States.

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