

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. RES. 455

Recognizing and supporting the continued efforts and contributions of the City of Ferndale to the LGBTQIA+ community of the State of Michigan.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 29, 2025

Ms. STEVENS submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

RESOLUTION

Recognizing and supporting the continued efforts and contributions of the City of Ferndale to the LGBTQIA+ community of the State of Michigan.

Whereas Ferndale is a city in Oakland County in the State of Michigan;

Whereas Ferndale has been one of the most significant queer hubs in Michigan for decades, seeing growth from the 1980s and 1990s of the LGBTQIA+ population, coinciding with a migration from neighborhoods in Detroit to communities north along Woodward Avenue;

Whereas, in 1988, the Michigan Organization for Human Rights worked to secure funding for a local LGBTQIA+ community center that would eventually evolve into Affirmations of Ferndale;

Whereas the Pittman-Puckett Gallery, located in Affirmations, was established in 1992 to honor Susan Pittman and Christine Puckett, two co-founders of Affirmations who were killed by their next-door neighbor in front of their home;

Whereas their deaths became a rallying point for the local LGBTQIA+ community and brought attention to LGBTQIA+ discrimination;

Whereas support groups and queer advocacy groups like the Midwest AIDS Prevention Project and Ferndale Pride were also formed with the purpose of providing accessible resources and development of community;

Whereas Affirmations opened its new, expanded LGBTQIA+ community center building in downtown Ferndale on June 3, 2007;

Whereas Affirmations serves as a hub for services to address disparities related, but not limited to, physical and mental health, community building, and economic challenges;

Whereas Affirmations has demonstrated its commitment to strengthening community health, employing seven licensed therapists, providing youth support services to address suicide rates in adolescence, providing vaccinations, STI/HIV testing and informational resources, and health care referrals;

Whereas Affirmations strengthens the sense of community in Ferndale, operated since its founding with volunteers, engaging over 150 LGBTQIA+ individuals and allies regularly;

Whereas Affirmations fosters economic growth and development by administering job readiness programs and fostering partnerships with businesses;

Whereas economic support is further displayed by Affirmations by responding to economic disparity through its provision of a public food pantry, serving hundreds of people in the city and surrounding area, and also by providing community members with assistance accessing SNAP and other government assistance programs, along with free legal and housing clinics;

Whereas Ferndale has been home to some of the largest Pride celebrations in Michigan, serving as home to Motor City Pride after moving from Royal Oak in 2003 until its relocation to Detroit's Hart Plaza in 2011, and now hosts Ferndale Pride, the second largest event in the State since 2011;

Whereas Ferndale hosted its 14th Annual Ferndale Pride festival last year, furthering community development, economic development, and public health;

Whereas the 14th Annual Ferndale Pride festival brought in an estimated 30,000 people to its annual festival downtown on Nine Mile Road, working with local businesses, health resource providers, and groups advocating for social justice to celebrate the LGBTQIA+ community;

Whereas the 15th Annual Ferndale Pride festival will take place on May 31, 2025;

Whereas, in 1999, Ferndale elected its first gay city official, Craig Covey, who eventually became Ferndale's first gay mayor;

Whereas Craig Covey was one of the first gay mayors in Michigan;

Whereas David Coulter immediately succeeded Craig Covey as Ferndale's second gay mayor and subsequently served as the first gay Oakland County Executive;

Whereas, in 2006, the city passed an anti-discrimination ordinance protecting LGBTQIA+ people from discrimination in public accommodations, housing, and business following earlier attempts;

Whereas, in 2017, Ferndale became one of the first municipalities in the Nation to permanently display the rainbow Pride flag in City Council Chambers;

Whereas Ferndale has taken steps to protect city employees from discrimination by instituting ungendered parental leave and other measures;

Whereas the city has dedicated itself to equality and inclusion of all residents, providing additional public safety resources, as needed, and civil rights trainings along with working with community organizations and leaders to increase access and equity in services;

Whereas Ferndale has received a perfect score from the Human Rights Campaign's Equality Index for six consecutive years, ranking among the most recognized in the State, demonstrating its commitment to inclusion and support of the LGBTQIA+ community;

Whereas the City of Ferndale has grown and evolved through its commitment to creating a better home for its residents, bringing together lifelong Ferndale natives and new neighbors to make meaningful changes;

Whereas the cultural and institutional shift toward a more diverse, LGBTQIA+ supportive environment in Ferndale has coincided with measurable positive socioeconomic growth in the city and expanded attention toward social justice across all marginalized communities; and

Whereas Ferndale serves as an example for other communities who strive to create a more welcoming and equitable society: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives recog-
2 nizes the City of Ferndale, its residents, businesses, and
3 community support organizations for their significance in
4 the LGBTQIA+ movement and for its continued dedica-
5 tion to creating a more equitable society.

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