

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. RES. 779

Recognizing the importance of the National Park Service in preserving the legacy of LGBTQI+ people and honoring their contributions to American history through the preservation of historic places and landmarks.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

OCTOBER 11, 2023

Mr. SOTO submitted the following resolution

OCTOBER 25, 2023

Referred to the Committee on Natural Resources

RESOLUTION

Recognizing the importance of the National Park Service in preserving the legacy of LGBTQI+ people and honoring their contributions to American history through the preservation of historic places and landmarks.

Whereas attitudes toward sexuality and gender expression have changed throughout history and will continue to change;

Whereas the term “LGBTQI+” is understood to mean lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, questioning/queer, intersex, and other identities;

Whereas LGBTQI+ people are found in every State of the Union;

Whereas society may never know the true number of LGBTQI+ Americans;

Whereas diverse sexualities and gender expressions were recognized in Indigenous cultures, prior to the creation of the American colonies;

Whereas LGBTQI+ people in the United States have diverse racial, ethnic, cultural, and religious backgrounds;

Whereas many influential Americans have contributed to the rich history of the United States, but have had their LGBTQI+ identity erased or unacknowledged, including—

(1) Lieutenant Frederick Gotthold Enslin, a member of the Continental Army under George Washington;

(2) Charley Parkhurst, legendary stagecoach driver;

(3) Langston Hughes, poet and leader of the Harlem Renaissance;

(4) Edna Thomas, an influential Black actress of the Harlem Renaissance;

(5) James Baldwin, novelist and playwright;

(6) Eleanor Roosevelt, First Lady of the United States and United Nations spokeswoman;

(7) Christine Jorgensen, World War II veteran and actress; and

(8) Pauli Murray, American civil rights activist, women's rights activist, lawyer, Episcopal priest, and author;

Whereas the many influential LGBTQI+ Americans in the history of the United States also include—

(1) Frank Kameny, veteran and activist;

(2) Bayard Rustin, civil rights leader and advisor to Martin Luther King, Jr.;

(3) Sally Ride, astronaut and first American woman in space;

(4) Alfred Kinsey, biologist;

(5) Harvey Milk, politician and first openly gay elected official in California;

(6) Marsha P. Johnson and Sylvia Rivera, self-proclaimed drag performers and community activists;

(7) Larry Kramer, author and cofounder of ACT UP;

(8) Elaine Noble, the first openly LGBTQI+ elected State official;

(9) Cleve Jones, activist, author, and founder of the NAMES Project AIDS Memorial Quilt;

(10) Gilbert Baker, creator of the rainbow pride flag;

(11) We'wha, cultural ambassador for Native Americans and most famous Lhamana on record;

(12) Alan Hart, a revolutionary tuberculosis researcher; and

(13) Audre Lorde, writer, feminist, womanist, librarian, and civil rights activist;

Whereas this resolution is by no means a comprehensive documentation of all the achievements and contributions of LGBTQI+ people to American history;

Whereas LGBTQI+ people in the United States, and all over the world, face obstacles in the struggle for equality;

Whereas Executive Order 10450, the 1953 Immigration Act, the “Employment of Homosexuals and Other Sex Perverts in Government” congressional report, sodomy laws, and the Defense of Marriage Act have contributed to the forced erasure and discrimination of LGBTQI+ Americans;

Whereas organized LGBTQI+ activist groups have advanced civil rights, including—

- (1) the Society for Human Rights;
- (2) the Mattachine Society;
- (3) the Daughters of Bilitis;
- (4) the Gay Liberation Front;
- (5) the Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries;
- (6) the Gay American Indians; and
- (7) the Gay Asian Pacific Alliance;

Whereas the determination and resilience of the LGBTQI+ community in the fight for equality has advanced civil rights protections for all Americans, such as—

- (1) *One Inc. v. Olesen* (1958), which expanded free speech protections;
- (2) *Romer v. Evans & Windsor* (1996), which prevented State constitutions from denying the LGBTQI+ community basic legal protections;
- (3) *Lawrence v. Texas* (2003), which eliminated sodomy laws;
- (4) *Obergefell v. Hodges* (2015), which guarantees same-sex couples the right to marriage; and
- (5) *Bostock v. Clayton County* (2020), which clarified title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 protections for members of the LGBTQI+ community;

Whereas LGBTQI+ Americans have been involved in revolutionary moments in time, including—

- (1) the Stonewall Riots;
- (2) the Annual Reminder Day pickets;
- (3) the first Pride Parade;
- (4) the Biltmore Invasion;
- (5) the 1978 Gay Freedom Day Parade in San Francisco, where the first pride flag was flown;

(6) the National March on Washington for Gay and Lesbian Rights; and

(7) the ACT UP Protest;

Whereas various places were essential to the existence and continued livelihood of the LGBTQI+ community, such as—

(1) the STAR House, which provided housing to homeless LGBTQI+ youth in the 1970s to 1980s;

(2) the first Pride Parade Route, which started at Washington Place in New York City in 1970;

(3) the Henry Gerber House, which was the meeting spot for the Society for Human Rights; and

(4) Castro Camera, Harvey Milk's photography store, which also served as his campaign headquarters;

Whereas the places mentioned are historic and worthy of preserving for the benefit of all;

Whereas preserving and maintaining historic sites is crucial in telling the stories of the past and allowing citizens of the United States to understand and embrace their heritage;

Whereas preserving LGBTQI+ historic sites contributes to the cultural well-being of the United States as they are physical reminders of America's commitment to tolerance, acceptance, and equality;

Whereas LGBTQI+ Americans have contributed to every aspect of United States society, including the fine arts, education, business, literature, journalism, sports, fashion, politics, government, the military, music, science, medicine, engineering, technology, and other fields in the United States;

Whereas only 10 LGBTQI+ historic places are registered with the National Park Service;

Whereas LGBTQI+ people share the hopes and aspirations of the people of the United States for peace and prosperity throughout the world; and

Whereas October is recognized as LGBTQI+ History Month:
Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

2 (1) recognizes the contributions of LGBTQI+
3 people as a significant part of the history, progress,
4 and heritage of the United States;

5 (2) believes that LGBTQI+ history should be
6 preserved by the National Park Service;

7 (3) encourages the National Park Service to
8 honor the contributions of LGBTQI+ Americans
9 through direct action, including but not limited to—

10 (A) increasing the number of LGBTQI+
11 sites listed in the National Register of Historic
12 Places;

13 (B) awarding preservation grants from the
14 Historic Preservation Fund to LGBTQI+ his-
15 torical sites; and

16 (C) conducting and sponsoring research in
17 preservation of historic LGBTQI+ sites; and

- 1 (4) affirms its commitment to celebrating the
- 2 legacy of LGBTQI+ people.

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