

# Proclamation



## CITY OF NORTHAMPTON COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

### Hampshire Pride March & Celebration May 4, 2024

**WHEREAS,** in 1981, conservative members of Congress introduced proposed legislation called, “The Family Protection Act”, to roll back the social progress that was made by the civil rights, feminist, and LGBTQIA+ movements. This legislation specifically targeted the rights of gay and lesbian people; and

**WHEREAS,** in April 1982, a group of dedicated and concerned residents organized “GALA” (Gay and Lesbian Activists) and called for a march in downtown Northampton in opposition to the so-called “Family Protection Act” to be held on Saturday, May 15, 1982; and

**WHEREAS,** the first Northampton Pride March had just a few hundred marchers, with some of them wearing bags over their heads to hide their identities from their employers out of fear of losing their jobs or housing; and

**WHEREAS** the Northampton Pride March continued annually, and in 2019, the last Pride Parade before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, Northampton hosted over 40,000 participants. The celebrations honored the diversity and contributions that our LGBTQIA+ friends and neighbors have made to our community, as well as recognizing the hard-won victories like protections from discrimination in the workplace and housing, as well as equal marriage; and

**WHEREAS** Pride events are an important time for celebration, as well as continued vigilance and activism - especially since our LGBTQIA+ community members face increased discrimination, violence, and political efforts to roll back those hard-fought rights; and

**WHEREAS** the ACLU is already tracking 487 anti-LGBTQIA+ bills in the 2024 Legislative Session, and Republican presidential candidates are making attacks on transgender youth and the LGBTQIA+ community central parts of their political platforms using hateful and dehumanizing rhetoric; and

**WHEREAS** as we come together and celebrate today, we also stand firmly rooted in solidarity and unwavering commitment to fight for and protect each other’s rights, art, expression, health, well-being, and hearts; and so

**NOW, THEREFORE,** I, Mayor Gina-Louise Sciarra, do hereby proclaim May 4, 2024, as

### Hampshire Pride Day

and welcome this incredible show of LGBTQIA+ pride in Northampton. Let us all honor the history and rights of our LGBTQIA+ friends and neighbors.

*IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have set my hand and imprinted the seal of the City of Northampton this 4<sup>th</sup> day of May 2024.*



  
Gina-Louise Sciarra, Mayor