

September 11th, 2023

For More Information

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**Statement in support of Milwaukee County Resolution 23-694 –
Declaring Milwaukee a Sanctuary for Trans and Non-Binary Individuals**

Hi My name is Megin McDonell, Executive director of Fair Wisconsin our states LGBTQ+ Civil rights organization, I am the parent of a transgender child.

Thank you to all the supervisors who are supporting and authoring resolution 23-694, and thank you for your continued leadership on the issues facing our community.

2023 has been the worst year yet for political and legal attacks on the LGBTQ+ community, especially the transgender and gender non-conforming community. Nationally, more than 550+ anti LGBTQ+ bills have been introduced, and at least 450 of them are explicitly anti-transgender. Right here in our own state of Wisconsin we have seen transgender healthcare and athlete bans introduced and now a bill which would require people who are incarcerated to be housed according to the gender they were assigned at birth.

Fair Wisconsin supports resolution 23-694, Declaring Milwaukee a Sanctuary for Trans and Non-Binary Individuals. However, we want to be abundantly clear – right now, Milwaukee is unfortunately **not** yet a true sanctuary, nor is Wisconsin. Not when Black trans women are still being murdered, not when there are hospitals in Wisconsin that refuse to provide gender affirming care, and not when there are efforts by legislators to dehumanize and eradicate the transgender community.

Right now, our LGBTQ+ youth, especially our transgender youth, are facing a mental health crisis. The Trevor Project's 2023 Youth Mental Health Survey shines a light on this. More than 40% of LGBTQ+ youth have considered suicide, while more than 14% have attempted it. 56% of LGBTQ+ youth who want mental health services are unable to access them. 33%, or 1/3, of LGBTQ+ youth say that their mental health is bad *almost always* due to the introduction of legislation that harms the LGBTQ+ community.

There is more work to do to make Milwaukee County a true sanctuary such as expanding access to support and social services to fill the gaps in housing and food security, access to health care, access to reliable transportation, and ending the over policing of our communities. This resolution is a step in the right direction--a critical step that gives hope to many--and may save lives.

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