The State of Washington

Proclamation

WHEREAS, Autism is a developmental disability that continues throughout an individual's lifespan; and

WHEREAS, It is estimated that over 156,000 people in the state of Washington are autistic, which is about 2% of the total population; and

WHEREAS, Autistic people live in every community across the state and are an integral part of the fabric of our society; and

WHEREAS, Just like every individual, autistic people have many valuable strengths, have an infinite capacity to learn and make decisions, and demonstrate many natural, unique and valuable skills and talents; and

WHEREAS, The stigma of autism and society's negative attitudes about autism associated with ableism and implicit bias causes higher rates of segregation, isolation, anxiety, depression and suicide for autistic people, additionally the intersectionality of autism and race and LGBTQ identities causes greater barriers to acceptance; and

WHEREAS, Autistic people face higher rates of unemployment and discrimination in housing and have the right to real jobs with living wages and to be included in public schools and live in every local community; and

WHEREAS, Autistic people experience higher rates of homelessness, domestic violence, and sexual assault and should have access to trauma-informed care when needed; and

WHEREAS, the most effective intervention for autism is education, employment and community-based supports to live independently; and

WHEREAS, Autistic people, their families, caregivers, and advocacy organizations are striving to bring about positive changes for the autism community; and

WHEREAS, through research, training, public services, support groups, advocacy, and increased awareness, we will be more accepting, inclusive, and better equipped to support autistic people and their families; and

WHEREAS, April is observed nationally as Autism Acceptance Month and April 2nd has been declared World Autism Awareness Day by the United Nations General Assembly; and

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Jay Inslee, Governor of the state of Washington, do hereby declare April 2021 as

Autism Acceptance Month

in Washington, and I encourage all people in our state to join me in this special observance.

Signed this 12th day of April, 2021

Governor Jay Inslee