*CONTENT WARNING*

This piece of legislation discusses suicide and mental health statistics
WHEREAS, The University of Wisconsin - Eau Claire (UW-Eau Claire) Student Senate is the official voice of the student body; and

WHEREAS, National Coming Out Day is an annual LGBTQIA+ awareness day that offers support to the queer community and queer individuals in the process of “coming out”; and

WHEREAS, the term “coming out” refers to the process that people in the queer community go through as they work to accept their sexual orientation or gender identity, as well as the process of sharing that identity openly with others; and

WHEREAS, National Coming Out Day was founded in 1988 by Richard Eichberg to raise awareness of the on-going civil rights movement that was happening at the time; and

WHEREAS, the date October 11th was chosen because it marked the one year anniversary of the second major National March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights; and

WHEREAS, National Coming Out Day is observed in the United States as well as many other countries around the world; and

WHEREAS, while coming out can be very beneficial for many, it can also endanger an individual in very severe ways; and

WHEREAS, even though coming out is very different for everyone, it is still a very brave and personal experience nonetheless; and

WHEREAS, the average age of questioning this new development of identity is 12 years old; and

WHEREAS, the average age of personal acknowledgement of this identity is 17 years old; and

WHEREAS, the average age of first sharing this identity is 20 years old; and

WHEREAS, suicide attempt rates are highest with queer youth of color, specifically Native/Indigenous youth, then queer white youth; and

WHEREAS, 70% of queer youth reported poor mental health most of the time or always during the COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, transgender and non-binary youth suicide attempt rates decreased by half when their pronouns were respected by those around them; and

WHEREAS, queer youth who had access to safe spaces that affirmed their sexual orientation and gender identity reported lower suicide attempt rates; and

1 https://www.plannedparenthood.org/learn/sexual-orientation/sexual-orientation/whats-coming-out
2 https://www.apa.org/pi/lgbt/resources/coming-out-day
3 https://www.pewresearch.org/social-trends/2013/06/13/a-survey-of-lgbt-americans/
4 https://www.thetrevorproject.org/survey-2021/
BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, UW- Eau Claire Student Senate will continue to support and advocate for safe spaces on campus for those that need it; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, UW- Eau Claire Student Senate will continue to support student organizations that seek to represent and advocate for queer individuals; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, UW- Student Senate will validate, respect, and support those who need it on National Coming Out Day; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, UW- Eau Claire Student Senate calls on all faculty, staff and students at large to support in every aforementioned way to the best of their abilities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, UW- Eau Claire Student Senate intends to meet with Provost Kleine to discuss adding this celebratory day, as well as many others, to the Detailed Academic Calendar for the coming years; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that upon passage of this resolution, President Mikoulinskii will transmit a copy to Dr. James Schmidt, Chancellor; Olga Diaz, Vice Chancellor for Equity, Diversity, Inclusion & Student Affairs; LaRue Pierce, Dean of Students; Dr. Patricia Kleine, Provost and Vice Chancellor, Academic Affairs; Teresa O’Halloran, Director, Affirmative Action; Grace Crickette, Vice Chancellor, Finance and Administration; William Felz, Interim Vice Chancellor, Enrollment Management; Jake Wrasse M.A., Legislative and Community Relations Liaison; Kristin Schumacher M. A., Director, University Centers; Grace Arrigoni, Student Body President, UW-Eau Claire Barron County; Dr. Chris Jorgenson, Director, Gender and Sexuality Resource Center; Kallie Friede, Associate Student Services Coordinator, Gender and Sexuality Resource Center, Emily Luebke, President, UWEC Pride;

SUBMITTED BY:
Meej Tshaj Muas, Equity In Student Matters Senate Director & Off Campus Senator