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## **Federal resolution historically recognizes Intersex Awareness Day**

### ***Resolution affirms right to bodily autonomy for those with variations in sex traits***

Today, for the first time a [federal resolution](#) was introduced into the US House of Representatives formally recognizing this date – October 26 – as Intersex Awareness Day.

The resolution, which was introduced by Representatives Balint (D-VT) and Pocan (D-WI) with the support of the Congressional Equality Caucus, calls for bodily autonomy for [intersex people](#) and criticizes the ongoing practice of nonconsensual and unnecessary surgeries on infants. These operations provoked the first [public demonstration](#) in the United States by intersex people and their allies, which took place outside the annual conference of the American Academy of Pediatrics in 1996. Intersex Awareness Day commemorates the anniversary of that historic protest.

Today’s resolution encourages the federal government, states, and other entities to “prioritize the health and human rights of intersex people” and asks providers to “offer culturally and clinically competent care.” It states that “health equity for intersex people is undermined by patterns of stigmatization and discrimination on the basis of variations in sex characteristics, intersex status, and perceived gender nonconformity.” For example, performing “irreversible surgeries and other interventions to make their bodies conform to stereotypical expectations of what it means to appear, behave as, or be male or female ... in the absence of individual consent can result in severe lasting physical and psychological harm.”

“Intersex awareness is not merely a matter of educating the public that people with intersex variations exist; it is additionally about illuminating the harmful legacy – and continuing practice – of unnecessary and unwanted medical interventions on young intersex children, which is increasingly recognized as a human rights violation around the world,” said Erika Lorshbough, Executive Director of interACT. “We extend our deep gratitude to Representatives Balint and Pocan for taking action to further these goals.”

“Amid the ongoing legislative threats to reproductive and gender-affirming care, support for bodily autonomy could not be more crucial. Intersex rights are being undermined by these same assaults – for example, bans on gender-affirming care contain explicit exceptions for the surgeries imposed on intersex infants without their consent – but this is not yet common knowledge,” explained interACT’s Legal & Policy Director Sylvan Fraser. “In honoring the history of intersex advocacy, this resolution will reveal how much our communities have been shoulder-to-shoulder together from the start.”

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*Through law and policy, media, and youth leadership programs, [interACT: Advocates for Intersex Youth](#) leads national conversations on intersex issues.*