

WHEREAS; mental health conditions are real and prevalent in the lives of folks across our state, and addressing mental health and ensuring that every person has access to quality, affordable, and culturally relevant services is essential to the overall health and well-being of all Wisconsinites; and

WHEREAS; the state of Wisconsin recognizes that there are many factors that can have an impact on an individual's mental health and their ability to access care—including, but not limited to, race, ethnicity, gender identity, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, religion, disability status, and geographic location—and that these factors intersect and compound one another, and can lead to challenges such as racism, bias, and discrimination in treatment settings, language barriers, lower quality of care, lack of or inadequate health insurance, and stigma; and

WHEREAS; the state of Wisconsin recognizes that there are many factors that can have an impact on an individual's mental health and their ability to access care—including, but not limited to, race, ethnicity, gender identity, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, religion, disability status, and geographic location—and that these factors intersect and compound one another, and can lead to challenges such as racism, bias, and discrimination in treatment settings, language barriers, lower quality of care, lack of or inadequate health insurance, and stigma; and

WHEREAS; from health outcomes to incarceration rates, and wage gaps to educational inequity, Wisconsin is consistently ranked one of the worst states in our nation for racial disparities, specifically for BIPOC, which have only been underscored by the COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS; behavioral health equity means ensuring high quality and culturally relevant resources and services are accessible to every Wisconsinite, and especially those most disproportionately impacted; and

WHEREAS; beginning in 2005, activists Bebe Moore Campbell and Linda Wharton-Boyd advocated for and succeeded in establishing July as National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month—now known as BIPOC Mental Health Awareness Month—which was first formally recognized by the United States House of Representatives in 2008; and

WHEREAS; this month, the state of Wisconsin reaffirms its commitment to promoting public awareness of mental health challenges, improving access to mental health treatment and services in communities of color, eliminating existing barriers, and prioritizing the behavioral and mental health needs of those most disproportionately impacted by poor mental health outcomes;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Tony Evers, Governor of the State of Wisconsin,
do hereby proclaim July 2021, as

BIPOC MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH

throughout the State of Wisconsin and I commend this observance
to all our state's residents.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Wisconsin to be affixed. Done at the Capitol in the City of Madison this 2nd day of July 2021.

TONY EVERS, Governor

By the Governor:

DOUGLAS LA FOLLETTE, Secretary of State