

WHEREAS; human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) is a virus that compromises the immune system and can potentially lead to acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) in affected individuals; and

WHEREAS; HIV/AIDS can lead to serious complications, such as an increased risk of cardiovascular, liver, and kidney disease, bone disease and loss, cognitive disorders, certain types of cancer, and other serious health conditions; and

WHEREAS; while HIV/AIDS can affect anyone, regardless of age, gender, race, nationality, geographic location, income level, or sexual orientation, according to the Human Rights Campaign, it continues to disproportionately impact certain members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) community—including gay and bisexual men and transgender women—and communities of color; and

WHEREAS; the Joint United Nations Program on HIV and AIDS estimates that there are nearly 38 million people living with HIV around the world and, according to the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS), there are approximately 8,000 people living with HIV in Wisconsin, including an estimated 1,100 who are unaware of their diagnosis; and

WHEREAS; stigma and fear surrounding HIV can negatively affect an individual's quality of life and self-image, potentially causing them to not disclose risk behaviors or their HIV status and to avoid seeking care; and

WHEREAS; it is important to understand that an HIV diagnosis is not a death sentence and that progression of the disease can be prevented, and people who receive proper care and take medications as directed can lower the HIV in their blood to undetectable levels, significantly reduce their likelihood of transmitting the virus, and experience increased quality of life; and

WHEREAS; since 1988, World AIDS Day has been observed annually in communities around the world to unite individuals, organizations, and government entities in the fight against HIV/AIDS, to show support for all those living with HIV/AIDS, and to recognize those who have lost their lives to the disease; and

WHEREAS; on this occasion, we recognize the important work of the DHS HIV Program, which operates as our state's leading response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic, working to reduce risk, educate the public about prevention, identification, and treatment, and provide assistance to individuals accessing treatment and insurance; and

WHEREAS; today, the state of Wisconsin joins DHS in standing with those whose lives have been impacted by HIV/AIDS, including members of the LGBTQ community who have borne the brunt of this epidemic for generations, and in reaffirming our commitment to improving the accessibility of prevention, education, and treatment resources for all Wisconsinites;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Tony Evers, Governor of the State of Wisconsin,  
do hereby proclaim December 1, 2021, as

## **WORLD AIDS DAY**

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 19<sup>th</sup> day of November 2021.



TONY EVERS, Governor

By the Governor:



DOUGLAS LA FOLLETTE, Secretary of State