

# **The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

## **A Proclamation**

Whereas,

Over 200,000 children and adults in Massachusetts have intellectual and developmental disabilities; and

Whereas,

All people with intellectual and developmental disabilities can live and work in the community. To do this, they need the right supports and services. They are entitled to these supports. With the right supports, they can work in competitive integrated employment. With the right supports, they can live on their own in the community. With the right supports, they can learn alongside their peers. Individualized support results in full inclusion; and

Whereas,

People with intellectual and developmental disabilities should be able to choose what they want for their lives. This is self-determination. Self-determination improves people's lives. When people choose for themselves, it creates more opportunities. When people choose for themselves, they can thrive in real jobs for real pay. When people choose for themselves, they get a better education. When people learn about decision-making and choice, they are more independent. When people choose for themselves, they can be healthier; and

Whereas,

Many community members provide support and care to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Support can come from family members and friends. Support can come from professionals and other community members. These supports are essential; and

Whereas,

In Massachusetts, we recognize that institutionalization separates people from community. Rather, we invest in services and supports that allow people with intellectual and developmental disabilities to live full lives. This year, as recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, we look to the future. We

imagine a future where all people with intellectual and developmental disabilities work, live, and learn in the community; and

Whereas,

Governor Baker's proposed Fiscal Year 2023 budget reflects important advocacy by the disability community. The budget recognizes that the COVID-19 pandemic has had a large impact on disability supports and services. The budget fully funds the Turning 22 program run by the Department of Developmental Services. This program supports young adults who are leaving special education. It supports them as they transition into the adult service system; and

Whereas,

This budget also increases funding for supporting families. It raises funding for Respite Services and Intensive Family Supports by \$5.8 million. This program is run by Department of Developmental Services. This additional money will provide essential resources to support people with disabilities and their families in their homes; and

Whereas:

In March, we celebrate Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month. We recognize the value of inclusion. We recognize the importance of supports and services. We recognize that people with intellectual and developmental disabilities make the Commonwealth a better, more diverse place to live; and

Now, Therefore, I, Charles Duane Baker, Governor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, do hereby proclaim the month of March, 2022 to be

Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month

And urge all the citizens of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to take cognizance of this event and participate fittingly in its observance.

Given at the Executive Chamber in Boston, this fifteenth day of February, in the year two thousand and twenty-two, and of the Independence of the United States of America, the two hundred and forty-fifth.

By his excellency

Charles D. Baker

Governor of the Commonwealth

Karyn E. Polito

Lt. Governor of the Commonwealth

William Francis Galvin

Secretary of the Commonwealth

God Save the Commonwealth of Massachusetts