

# *To designate MARCH 2023 as “Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month”*

*The Commonwealth of Massachusetts*

## *A Proclamation*

*Whereas,*

*Over 200,000 children and adults in Massachusetts have intellectual and developmental disabilities. They reflect the rich racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity in our Commonwealth; 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,*

*We recognize and value the important work that direct care workers do each day so that people with intellectual and developmental disabilities can live fulfilling lives; and*

*Whereas,*

*In Massachusetts, we recognize that institutionalization separates people from the community. Rather, we invest in services and supports that allow people with intellectual and developmental disabilities to live full lives. This year, as we continue to 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,*

*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, Maura Healey, Governor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, do hereby proclaim the month of March, 2023 to be*

*Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month*

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

*Given at the Executive Chamber in Boston, this first day of March in the year two thousand and twenty-three, and of the Independence of the United States of America, the two hundred and forty-sixth.*

*BY HER EXCELLENCY*

*MAURA HEALEY  
GOVERNOR OF THE COMMONWEALTH  
THE COMMONWEALTH*

*KIM DRISCOLL  
LT. GOVERNOR OF*

*WILLIAM FRANCIS GALVIN  
SECRETARY OF THE  
COMMONWEALTH*

*God Save the Commonwealth of Massachusetts*