

Steve Mellon/Po

City Council proclaims Sept. 12 as 'Protect Trans Kids Day' in Pittsburgh



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Pittsburgh City Council has declared Sept. 12 Protect Trans Kids Day in the city — a move that was first started by Pittsburgh LGBTQ Charities and 50 lawn signs.



Pittsburgh LGBTQ Charities, a nonprofit organization that raises community awareness for LGBTQ+ issues in Western



Pennsylvania, launched the “Protect Trans Kids” project which distributed more than 900 signs and stickers to allies of the transgender community in support of a trans teenager and her



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transgender community in support of a trans teenager and her family in Observatory Hill who were harassed by a neighbor who claimed “transing kids is abuse and homophobia.”

City Councilman Bobby Wilson initiated the proclamation, which was written by a group of local transgender teens, to proclaim Sept. 12 as Protect Trans Kids Day in Pittsburgh.

The proclamation states that the city of Pittsburgh “should acknowledge the unique contributions and needs of trans youth and take every possible action to Protect Trans Kids.”

Sue Kerr, the board President of the Pittsburgh LGBTQ Charities, said it was significant for local transgender teenagers to write the proclamation because they best understand the struggles of transgender youth.

“They’re young adults, but they took on the responsibility of speaking for especially trans youth who are younger than that, because that is the target age range of most of the transphobic legislation across the country because that’s who should lead this,” Ms. Kerr said.

Ms. Kerr also said Sept. 12 was decided to be the chosen date because it was close to significant dates for the youth including back to school and national coming out day on Oct. 11.

Pittsburgh LGBTQ Charities and the parents of the teenagers at Monday’s event requested that the last names of the teenagers not be used for publication.

Ace, one of the teenagers who wrote the proclamation, is proud to be able to help future transgender kids feel more accepted in their community.

“To be properly recognized by the city is essentially a beautiful moment for me knowing that it’s a stepping stone for kids to not ever have to feel how I felt or how other kids around me kind of felt like growing up,” they said. “No one was teaching or sharing trans joy around me and I am very thrilled to know that going forward, kids just like I was are going to have the opportunity to be themselves.”

Esai, another transgender teen who helped write the proclamation, said she is happy to have her voice heard.

“I got to a very accepting school and even I feel out of place for who I am sometimes, so I can't imagine how it feels for other trans youth at other schools that may not be as accepting of their identities or who they are,” she said. “So I wanted to say thank you so much for being there for us and shining a light on us and letting us use our voices in this amazing way “



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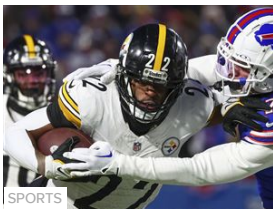
Mr. Wilson said he hopes the proclamation will help better support the transgender youth in the community.

“Transgender youth are important and valued members of Pittsburgh, including our schools, and is our responsibility of all adults cisgender and trans to protect their physical, emotional and mental welfare,” Mr. Wilson said. “The city hopes this proclamation will help promote all possibilities for the transgender youth to grow and flourish in our community.”

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