

GENDER ALLIANCE OF THE SOUTH SOUND

Tacoma, Washington

For Immediate Release:

November 17, 2008

Governor Proclaims Transgender Day of Remembrance

Governor Christine Gregoire has proclaimed Thursday, November 20, 2008 as "Transgender Day of Remembrance" in Washington state. This is believed to be the first instance of any U.S. state government recognizing an issue exclusive to transgender citizens, as contrasted to any state recognition of issues pertinent to the broader gay, lesbian and transgender alliance. Governor Gregoire issued the proclamation at the request of Tacoma's Gender Alliance of the South Sound.

The proclamation from the governor concludes, "I urge all citizens to join me in this special observance, and to work towards eliminating discrimination on all levels and to promote tolerance."

Michelle Balch, chair of the Gender Alliance of the South Sound board, responded to the announcement, "I'm proud that our group has been able to elicit such a comprehensive statement of support for the dignity and equality of this state's transgender population."

A copy of the entire proclamation is available at the Gender Alliance of the South Sound web site: www.southsoundgender.com/2008-GovsProc.jpg

2008 represents the tenth anniversary of Transgender Day of Remembrance observances by the worldwide transgender community, traditionally commemorated on November 20th. The occasion solemnly marks the deaths of hundreds of transgender people by violence, abuse or neglect. Documented crimes against these transgender people range from political assassinations to homophobic hate crimes to neglect by the medical profession resulting in death. There are believed to be many hundreds, perhaps thousands, of other, undocumented, cases of transgender individuals losing their lives as a result of violence, ignorance, bigotry or other societal abuse or neglect.

Transgender Day of Remembrance commemorations include dozens of events across the United States, Canada, European nations and other countries.

For the second year in a row, the Gender Alliance of the South Sound will commemorate Transgender Day of Remembrance with a candlelight memorial this Thursday, November 20, from 6:30-8:00 PM at the Rainbow Center, 741 St. Helens Avenue in downtown Tacoma. A memorial window display has also been installed at the Rainbow Center and will remain in place from Sunday through Thursday of this week.

A Transgender Day of Remembrance gathering will be held on Tuesday, November 18, from 7:00-9:00 PM at the Ravenna UMC, 5753 33rd Ave. NE in Seattle. The public is invited to attend all events.

While there are no conclusive statistics on the number of "transgender" individuals in the United States, various studies suggest that perhaps as much as one to ten percent of the general population may fall under the broad transgender umbrella of people "transgressing" normal gender presentation, which includes transsexuals, both female-to-male and male-to-female, crossdressers, and others who do not conform to gender norms.

More information regarding Transgender Day of Remembrance can be found online at www.transgenderdor.org.

The Gender Alliance of the South Sound web site is www.southsoundgender.com.

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