

IN THE COUNTY LEGISLATURE OF JACKSON COUNTY, MISSOURI

A RESOLUTION recognizing and honoring the pioneering individuals, organizations, and historic milestones that established Jackson County, Missouri as an early center of LGBTQ+ civil rights advocacy and community building.

RESOLUTION NO. 22305, June 15, 2026

INTRODUCED BY Jalen Anderson and Manuel Abarca IV, County Legislators

WHEREAS, Jackson County, Missouri and the Kansas City metropolitan area played a significant role in the early development of LGBTQ+ civil rights advocacy in the United States, including hosting a 1966 national planning conference that brought together leaders of the emerging homophile movement; and,

WHEREAS, this contributed to early national organizing efforts and positioned Kansas City as a hub for communication, coordination, and advancement of LGBTQ+ advocacy during a time when such efforts were undertaken at great personal risk; and,

WHEREAS, Drew Shafer founded the Phoenix Society for Individual Freedom and established early institutions that supported LGBTQ+ advocacy and community building in Missouri; and,

WHEREAS, Kansas City became an important center for the production and distribution of LGBTQ+ advocacy materials during the 1960s, supporting the broader national movement; and,

WHEREAS, Lea Hopkins is recognized as a trailblazing Black lesbian leader who played

a central role in organizing early Pride celebrations and advocating for visibility and justice; and,

WHEREAS, Jon Barnett founded the Kansas City chapter of ACT UP and led efforts to raise awareness and demand action during the HIV/AIDS crisis; and,

WHEREAS, Tim Van Zandt became Missouri's first openly gay state representative in 1994, advancing representation and equality; and,

WHEREAS, Jeannette Howard Foster contributed to early LGBTQ+ scholarship through her literary research; and,

WHEREAS, Andrea Nedelsky and Maryanne Hopper helped establish Womontown, an intentional community that provided a safe and affirming space for lesbian residents; and,

WHEREAS, institutions such as the KC Pioneers and the Gay and Lesbian Archives of Mid-America continue to preserve and advance the history and contributions of LGBTQ+ residents; and,

WHEREAS, preserving and uplifting this history remains essential to ensuring that all residents are recognized, respected, and included in Jackson County's ongoing story; now therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the County Legislature of Jackson County, Missouri, that the Legislature hereby recognizes and honors the pioneering individuals, organizations, and milestones that established Jackson County as an early center of LGBTQ+ civil rights advocacy; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the Legislature expresses its appreciation for the leaders, organizers, and community members whose efforts have shaped a more inclusive community; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature affirms the importance of preserving this history for future generations.

Effective Date: This Resolution shall be effective immediately upon its passage by a majority of the Legislature.

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Bryan Covinsky
County Counselor

Certificate of Passage

I hereby certify that the attached resolution, Resolution No. 22305 of June 15, 2026, was duly passed on June 15, 2026 by the Jackson County Legislature. The votes thereon were as follows:

Yeas	<u>7</u>	Nays	<u>0</u>
Abstaining	<u>0</u>	Absent	<u>1</u>
Excused	<u>1</u>		

6-16-2026
Date

Mary Jo Spino
Mary Jo Spino, Clerk of Legislature