

Proclamation

by Governor Patrick Morrisey

- Whereas,** West Virginians living with mental illness, intellectual and developmental disabilities, and other complex needs were cared for in public institutions across the state, often during a time when understanding of those conditions was limited; and
- Whereas,** the individuals admitted to these facilities, whether they passed in care or eventually returned to their communities, deserve to be remembered, respected, and fully recognized for the lives they lived; and
- Whereas,** the purpose of this observance is to honor their stories, uplift their dignity, and affirm that no person's worth is defined by their diagnosis, circumstance, or setting of care; and
- Whereas,** those who survived institutionalization, those still living with its impact, and those continuing to navigate mental health care today deserve to know that they are seen, heard, and valued; and
- Whereas,** the exact number of individuals who lived and died in these settings is not fully known, though research efforts continue, and the memory of each one is essential to West Virginia's general history of care and community; and
- Whereas,** mental health remains a critical concern in our state and beyond, and this day offers a shared opportunity to support awareness, reduce stigma, and champion compassion and understanding; and
- Whereas,** remembrance alone is not enough, we must ensure visibility, promote healing, and stand in solidarity with those whose experiences have often gone unspoken; and
- Whereas,** this observance gives voice to the voiceless, affirms the humanity of those once marginalized, and reinforces that dignity is not a gift, it is a right; and
- Whereas,** by naming this day, West Virginia demonstrates its continued commitment to recognizing all people impacted by mental health care, past, present, and future, with respect and purpose; and
- Whereas,** this day shall be observed annually on the third Monday in September through remembrance events, public reflection, educational outreach, and collective affirmation of the value of every life.

Now, Therefore, Be it Resolved that I, Patrick Morrisey, Governor of the Great State of West Virginia, do hereby proclaim *September 15, 2025*, as:

Dignity Day

in the Mountain State and encourage all citizens to join me in this observance.

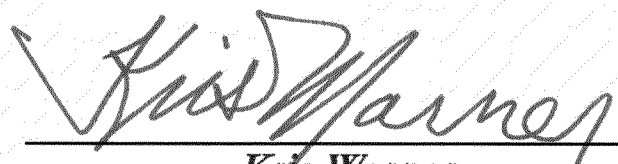
In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of West Virginia to be affixed.

Done at the Capitol, City of Charleston, State of West Virginia, this the Fifteenth Day of September, in the year of our Lord, Two Thousand Twenty-Five, and in the One Hundred Sixty-Third Year of the State.



Patrick Morrisey
Governor

By the Governor:



Kris Warner
Secretary of State