

Proclamation

by Governor Patrick Morrisey

- Whereas,** an ostomy is a type of surgery that creates an opening (stoma) in the abdomen that allows for the removal of bodily waste when a person has lost the normal function of digestive or urinary systems due to birth defects, colorectal cancer, bladder cancer, Crohn's disease, ulcerative colitis, and other medical conditions; and
- Whereas,** they are also necessary in cases of severe abdominal or pelvic trauma resulting from accidents or from injuries sustained during military service. The bodily waste passes through the stoma into an ostomy 'pouch' on the outside of the body or in the case of continent diversion surgeries, an internal surgically created reservoir; and
- Whereas,** approximately 725,000 to 1 million Americans have an ostomy, with approximately 100,000 new ostomy procedures performed each year; and
- Whereas,** ostomy or continent diversion surgery can occur at any age and affects people from all cultural backgrounds; and
- Whereas,** the United States of America celebrates Ostomy Awareness Day every year on the first Saturday of October; and
- Whereas,** West Virginia is committed to increasing public understanding of "ostomy" to eventually help dispel the fear of those about to undergo this surgery, as well as the fear that confronts their families. This day can serve as a reminder to the American public that this is a life-saving and life-restoring surgery; and
- Whereas,** West Virginia recognizes the need that public education and awareness is vital to ensure those who are living with an ostomy face no discrimination and are accepted as normal, healthy individuals. Through education and awareness we can erase the myths, stigma and embarrassment that are sometimes associated with having an ostomy; and
- Whereas,** West Virginia and other government and private sectors are deeply committed to the proper care and advancement of knowledge about bowel and urinary diversion surgery as a result of birth defects, disease, injury and other digestive disorders; and
- Whereas,** to increase public acceptance of ostomy surgery and continent diversion surgery and to help the country better understand that not all disabilities are visible, West Virginia is designating "Ostomy Awareness Day" on October 3, 2026.

Now, Therefore, Be it Resolved that I, Patrick Morrisey, Governor of the Great State of West Virginia, do hereby proclaim ***October 3, 2026,*** as:

Ostomy Awareness Day

in the Mountain State and encourage all citizens to join me in 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 Eighth Day of October, in the year of our Lord, Two Thousand Twenty-Six, and in the One Hundred Sixty-Fourth Year of the State.



Patrick Morrisey
Governor

By the Governor:



Kris Warner
Secretary of State