

# News Release

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## **County Executive and Council Recognize the Akron Pride Festival and Equity March**

**SUMMIT COUNTY, OHIO**—Summit County Executive Ilene Shapiro and County Council passed legislation to recognize the 2023 Akron Pride Festival and Equity March to reaffirm their commitment to equality and equity for LGBTQ+ people living in Summit County. All residents are welcome to join in this year’s celebration on Saturday, August 26!

“Our community has made great progress toward equality and inclusion for LGBTQ+ residents,” said County Executive Shapiro, “As we celebrate Akron Pride, it is important to both reflect on our history and to look forward to a future full of hope, joy, and promise for LGBTQ+ people of all backgrounds.”

Over the past decade, great strides have been made in advancing LGBTQ+ rights including important Supreme Court rulings such as *Obergefell v. Hodges* that legalized same-sex marriage in 2015 and three cases that extended anti-discrimination provisions of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to LGBTQ+ people in 2020. Significant legislation advancing LGBTQ+ rights includes the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act of 2009, the Don’t Ask Don’t Tell Repeal Act of 2010, and the Respect for Marriage Act of 2022. However, a recent surge in anti-LGBTQ+ laws targeting trans and non-binary people, drag queens, LGBTQ+ literature, and the inclusion of LGBTQ+ topics and history in schools threatens this long trend of progress. Though pride is a celebration, it is also a reminder to advocate for positive change.

“My family and I look forward to enjoying the Pride Festival every year,” said Councilwoman Christine Wiedie Higham, District 6, “And we are so proud to join folks from across Summit County as allies to the LGBTQ+ community!”

Those interested in attending or volunteering for this year’s Akron Pride Festival on August 26 can find more information at [akronpridefestival.org](http://akronpridefestival.org).



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