



City of Mercer Island, Washington

Proclamation

WHEREAS, as many as 1 in 5 Americans are living with various disabilities, whether from diseases, injuries, aging, or other causes; and

WHEREAS, disability IS diversity, and the disabled deserve the same opportunities for accessibility as do other citizens, as a matter of fairness, equity and inclusion; and

WHEREAS, 1 in 10 people suffer from more than 7,000 rare diseases -- 90 percent of them without any cure or effective therapies, according to the National Institutes of Health (NIH); and

WHEREAS, Rare Disease Day is observed annually on the last day of February – the rarest date on the calendar – to underscore the nature of rare diseases and their effects on all of us; and

WHEREAS, the National Organization for Rare Diseases (NORD) is sponsoring Rare Disease Day on Feb. 28, 2021, with a “Show Your Stripes” campaign -- because the Zebra is the symbol that has been chosen to represent the effort; and

WHEREAS, a growing coalition of Mercer Island citizens and organizations are promoting the “Show Your Stripes” campaign by encouraging citizens to pick up “Zebra Masks” at various Mercer Island businesses; and

WHEREAS, this coalition is urging Mercer Island citizens to wear their Zebra Masks that day as they “roll and stroll” with disabled children or others on foot or in wheelchairs wherever they go on the Island.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Mayor Benson Wong, do hereby proclaim February 28, 2021 as

RARE DISEASE DAY

in Mercer Island and I encourage all residents to join me our continuing commitment to be an accessible and inclusive community that rejects discrimination against individuals with disabilities of any kind, and urge all members and residents of our community to work together to overcome any unequal treatment, because equity and inclusion are the hallmarks of a truly compassionate society.

APPROVED, this 16th day of February 2021.

Benson Wong, Mayor

