

PROCLAMATION

WORLD OSTOMY AWARENESS DAY

"Ostomates' Rights are Human Rights - anytime and anywhere!"

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. 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 does not lower life expectancy; and

WHEREAS, ostomy or continent diversion surgery does not discriminate and quality ostomy care should be provided to all regardless of race/ethnicity, age, gender, religion, place of birth, health or other status; and

WHEREAS, largely through the efforts of United Ostomy Associations of America, Inc., (UOAA) and its over 300 Affiliated Support Groups, Americans needing these surgeries are becoming more aware of the opportunities for education, mutual aid, advocacy and support that are of such great benefit to them and their families; and

WHEREAS, the United States of America celebrates World Ostomy Day with the International Ostomy Association and United Ostomy Associations of America, Inc. every three years on the first Saturday of October; and

WHEREAS, the Borough of Watchung 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, Watchung 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

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WHEREAS, Watchung 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

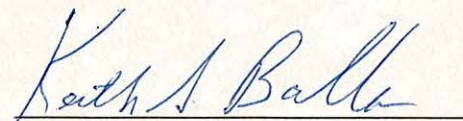
WHEREAS, to increase public acceptance of ostomy surgery and continent diversion surgery with the theme "Ostomates' Rights Are Human Rights - anytime and anywhere!" To help the country recognize that health is a human right for everyone, at every age, and that this underserved patient population has patient rights and are entitled to quality ostomy health care. The Borough of Watchung honors "World Ostomy Day" on **October 2, 2021**; and

WHEREAS, Watchung's resident Ellyn Mantell has been presented by the United Ostomy Associations of America, as the Mighty Advocate of the Year, after having created three, and soon to be four Ostomy Support Groups (Overlook, RWJ Somerset, RWJ Barnabas and this fall, RWJ New Brunswick) and began a grass roots movement for Overlook Medical Center to have an Outpatient Ostomy Center.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Keith S. Balla, Mayor of the Borough of Watchung, County of Somerset, do hereby proclaim **October 2, 2021** as

"World Ostomy Day - Ostomates' Rights Are Human Rights anytime and anywhere!"

and I call upon all residents of Watchung to unite on this day in a showing of support to ensure quality health care for all ostomates in all healthcare settings.


Keith S. Balla, Mayor

Adopted: September 22, 2021

