

Mark, Robyn, Owen, Elliott and Amelie Edmondson
8234 Mountain View Drive
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September 9th, 2022

Attn: Mayor Jack Crompton and Council

RE: Proclamation of October 15th as “Pregnancy and Infant Loss Awareness Day”

We are parents striving to raise awareness and recognition of a tragedy sadly close to our hearts.

On October 30th, 2014 our son Owen Benjamin Edmondson was born, a day after his due date, after a wonderful and healthy pregnancy. He suffered a stressful labour and was delivered through an emergency caesarean but had already suffered severe oxygen deprivation which caused irreversible brain damage. The hospital were able to stabilize him so we could spend an incredibly powerful 5 days parenting him in the NICU, learning his character and personality traits. Time spent together as a family. Unfortunately, our little boy could not be saved and we had to make a decision no parent should ever have to make. We were able to give Owen a beautiful death out in the fresh Vancouver air listening to the wind in the trees and feeling the raindrops land on his head. Owen’s spirit lives on through every adventure we take and smile we share. His presence is strongly felt in our family, and is greatly loved by his little brother and sister, Elliott and Amelie.

Since this has happened to our little family, we have learned of more people in the community that have had similar experiences. One of the most alarming parts of our experience was our naivety due to the lack of awareness and the silence that surrounds these tragic events. We know that we're not alone. Promoting awareness of pregnancy and infant loss will increase the likelihood that families experiencing loss will receive understanding and support as they face the challenges of their distinctive bereavement.

We are writing to request your support to declare October 15th as “Pregnancy and Infant Loss Awareness Day” again this year in Whistler. We request that in addition to this declaration, the lights across the Fitzsimmons Creek are changed to the campaign pink/blue colours for the evening with a sign explaining the event and the municipality's support on the issue (the sign from previous years could be reused this year).

The lighting of the Fitzsimmons bridge on October 15th will be an evening of honour, recognition and support of families in our community. There will be no formal event planned.

Thousands of families across Canada are devastated each year by the death of their baby through miscarriage, stillbirth or neonatal loss. It is important to our family that this day be recognized in order to help break the stigma and silence, and to once again bring our community together in support of this and each other.

There is a Canadian action site which contains information about what this day hopes to achieve, <http://www.october15.ca/>. Among other municipalities in BC and other provinces, the city of Vancouver acknowledges this day, changing the colours of the lighting on BC Place in support.

If there's involvement required from our part we would be honoured to do what is needed. We are now responsible for parenting the spirit and memory of our son in ways we had never imagined. We want to ensure Owen Benjamin Edmondson, and the children of other local residents, are never forgotten.

Thank you again for your support,

Mark, Robyn, Owen, Elliott, and Amelie Edmondson

