



STATE OF TENNESSEE
PROCLAMATION
BY THE GOVERNOR

WHEREAS, nationwide, approximately 5 million people have developmental disabilities; and

WHEREAS, in Tennessee, more than 103,000 adults and children have developmental disabilities, and the vast majority of these individuals are primarily or solely supported throughout their lifespan by their families; and

WHEREAS, people with developmental disabilities share with all Tennesseans the desire to achieve personal success through education, meaningful work, and family and community ties; and

WHEREAS, people with developmental disabilities deserve equal opportunities to enjoy, participate in and contribute to their local communities alongside their neighbors without disabilities; and

WHEREAS, Tennessee is committed to recognizing that every person, regardless of perceived ability, has valuable strengths, infinite capacity to learn and make decisions, and the capability to make important contributions to their communities if given opportunities to do so; and

WHEREAS, Tennessee is therefore committed to encouraging communities and other support structures to promote higher expectations and self-determination for individuals with disabilities; and

WHEREAS, "Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month" is an appropriate time to recognize Tennessee's public policy accomplishments concerning persons with disabilities and to also identify improvements to public policy that facilitate full inclusion of Tennessee's citizens with developmental disabilities and their families;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Bill Haslam, Governor of the State of Tennessee, do hereby proclaim March, 2017 as

*Developmental Disabilities
Awareness Month*

in Tennessee and encourage all citizens to join me in this worthy observance.



IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the official seal of the State of Tennessee to be affixed at Nashville on this twenty-fifth day of January, 2017.

Bill Haslam

Governor

John R. Hargett

Secretary of State