



STATE OF TENNESSEE  
**PROCLAMATION**  
BY THE GOVERNOR

**WHEREAS**, Tennesseans with disabilities, including mental illnesses and substance abuse disorders, experience disproportionately high levels of unemployment and underemployment; and

**WHEREAS**, people with disabilities in Tennessee share with the state's other six million residents the desire to achieve personal success and economic self-sufficiency through meaningful work in their communities and deserve the same opportunity for employment as all Tennesseans; and

**WHEREAS**, every person, regardless of ability, has valuable strengths, infinite capacity to learn and the potential to make important contributions to their local communities; and

**WHEREAS**, "Disability Employment Awareness Month" is an appropriate time to recognize the value of employees with disabilities to the state's current and future workforce, as well as Tennessee's public policy accomplishments concerning expanding employment opportunities for citizens with disabilities; and

**WHEREAS**, Tennessee is an Employment First state, and has been recognized by the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy for embracing systems change and achieving several milestones resulting in jobs in community settings at competitive wages; and

**WHEREAS**, the Tennessee Employment First Task Force, created by Executive Order No. 28, continues to work together through public and private partnerships to eliminate barriers to employment by improving the coordination, effectiveness and efficiency of government programs; and

**WHEREAS**, by joint resolution, Congress has designated October of each year as National Disability Employment Awareness Month, and has called upon state and local governments to join in the national observance;

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

*Disability Employment 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 twelfth day of October, 2017.

Handwritten signature of Bill Haslam in blue ink.

Governor

Handwritten signature of Joe Wargitt in blue ink.

Secretary of State

