



STATE OF TENNESSEE  
**PROCLAMATION**

BY THE GOVERNOR

**WHEREAS**, the Tennessee Safe Haven Law went into effect on July 1, 2001 and was amended in May 2009, and allows a mother to relinquish a newborn infant to personnel at a hospital, birthing center, community health clinic, outpatient, walk-in clinic, EMS facility, fire station, or law enforcement facility, anonymously and free from fear of prosecution; and

**WHEREAS**, relinquished babies then may become custody of the state and are placed in a responsible and nurturing safe haven; and

**WHEREAS**, the Tennessee Safe Haven Law provides a safe alternative to abandonment for Tennessee mothers who feel they cannot care for a newborn baby; and

**WHEREAS**, it is the hope of the State of Tennessee that as awareness of this law increases, it will stop the abandonment of newborn infants, a practice that has led to healthy babies being found harmed, deceased or in unsafe places; and

**WHEREAS**, since the signing of the Tennessee Safe Haven Law, numerous newborn babies have been safely relinquished in Tennessee pursuant to this Law, but at the same time, newborn infants continue to be unsafely abandoned; and

**WHEREAS**, the Tennessee Safe Haven Law is a critical statute in the state of Tennessee, as it affords the chance of a better life for abandoned newborn babies, but continued public awareness of this Law is necessary to fulfill the goals of protecting all newborn infants and providing mothers with a responsible and safe mechanism to relinquish a newborn infant;

**NOW, THEREFORE**, I, Bill Lee, Governor of the State of Tennessee, do hereby proclaim April 2019 as

*Safe Haven 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 nineteenth day of February, 2019.

*Bill Lee*

Governor

*Ju Wang*

Secretary of State