



STATE OF TENNESSEE  
**PROCLAMATION**

BY THE GOVERNOR

**WHEREAS**, the Governor's Books from Birth Foundation (GBBF) strengthens early literacy in Tennessee by sustaining early literacy programs for children statewide; and

**WHEREAS**, reading to a young child is the single most important thing a caregiver can do to enhance a child's early brain development, early literacy skills acquisition, school readiness and future workforce development; and

**WHEREAS**, Tennessee is home to more than 407,000 children under age five; and

**WHEREAS**, every one of those children has access to Dolly Parton's Imagination Library program, Tennessee Storybook Trails, and Summer Book Buses where currently operational; and

**WHEREAS**, the not-for-profit GBBF - in partnership with Dolly Parton's Imagination Library, the Dollywood Foundation, community leaders, and countless volunteers - provides one high-quality, age-appropriate book every month mailed to enrolled children from birth to age five, at no cost to families and regardless of income; and

**WHEREAS**, GBBF, in partnership with volunteers statewide, has sustained an Imagination Library program in each of Tennessee's 95 counties for the past 15 years, mailing over 36 million books since 2004; and

**WHEREAS**, Tennessee's Imagination Library is made financially possible through a unique use of public, private and corporate funding; and

**WHEREAS**, GBBF partners with communities to launch early literacy initiatives, such as Tennessee Storybook Trails and Summer Book Buses, to engage caregivers and young children around reading and to continue to provide children with access to the resources, guidance and support they need to become lifelong learners; and

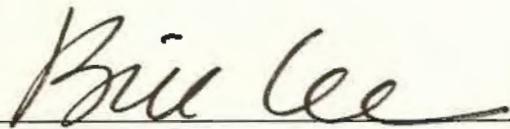
**WHEREAS**, the establishment of Tennessee's Early Literacy Month will provide communities across the state an opportunity to fundraise, register more children into Dolly Parton's Imagination Library, and increase local awareness of early literacy efforts and resources available to children, such as the Imagination Library program, Tennessee Storybook Trails and Book Bus programs;

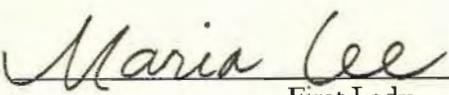
**NOW, THEREFORE**, we, Bill Lee, Governor of the State of Tennessee, and Maria Lee, First Lady of the State of Tennessee, do hereby proclaim the month of September 2019, as

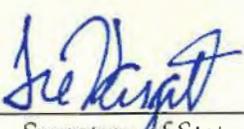
*Early Literacy Month*

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 August, 2019.

  
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Governor

  
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First Lady

  
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Secretary of State

