



STATE OF TENNESSEE  
**PROCLAMATION**

BY THE GOVERNOR

**WHEREAS**, over 80,000 babies are born in Tennessee each year and the maternal health and, more specifically, the mental health of women before, during, and after pregnancy is an issue of great concern to women and their families; and

**WHEREAS**, between 10 and 20 percent of new and expectant mothers are affected by Perinatal Depression and related mood disorders such as anxiety and psychosis, and they may experience associated symptoms, which are often overlooked and heavily stigmatized because new and expectant mothers suffering from a perinatal mood disorder often feel confused, ashamed, and isolated; and

**WHEREAS**, many at-risk women may not seek help because they are not informed about Perinatal Depression and related mood disorders as part of their health care, because there is a lack of knowledge and use of screening and assessment tools, and because they are unaware of treatment and community supportive services for Perinatal Depression and related mood disorders; and

**WHEREAS**, heightened awareness and increased education among all residents in Tennessee regarding the incidence of Perinatal Depression is critical; and

**WHEREAS**, Perinatal Depression and related mood disorders affect all categories of women and teenage girls regardless of their age, race, or income level; and they can have a profound impact on the family and significantly contribute to adverse developmental and behavioral outcomes and attachment disorders in the young children of affected women; and

**WHEREAS**, Perinatal Depression is highly treatable with therapeutic intervention such as medication, professional therapy and counseling, support groups and community support services including crisis hotlines;

**NOW, THEREFORE**, I, Bill Lee, Governor of the State of Tennessee, do hereby proclaim May 2021 as

*Maternal Mental Health 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 seventeenth day of February, 2021.

*Bill Lee*

Governor

*Jeffrey W. Matthews*

Secretary of State