



STATE OF TENNESSEE

# PROCLAMATION

BY THE GOVERNOR

**WHEREAS**, mental health encompasses a person's emotional, psychological, and social well-being affecting their thoughts, feelings, ability to handle stress, maintain relationships, respond and adapt to daily life changes, and participate fully with family, work, and community life; and

**WHEREAS**, a lack of mental health awareness and pervasive stigma of mental illness prevents people from reaching out for the help they so desperately need resulting in untold hurt, hardships, or worse; and

**WHEREAS**, Tennessee recognizes and supports a comprehensive public behavioral health continuum for the Tennesseans with the least means to obtain prevention, education, early intervention, treatment, and recovery support services; and

**WHEREAS**, since 2019, the State of Tennessee has dedicated nearly \$350 million in new funding to the Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services, including more than \$60 million to bolster the community behavioral health workforce by creating incentives to recruit and retain professionals and \$3 million for the creation of the Tennessee Behavioral Health Pathways Scholarship to support the next generation of the behavioral health workforce; and

**WHEREAS**, the prudent management of the TennCare program generated additional federal funding by way of shared savings which will be reinvested into many different healthcare sectors including the public behavioral health system starting in the state fiscal year 2024-2025; and

**WHEREAS**, the Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services, Tennessee Association of Mental Health Organizations, community mental health providers, consumer and family advocates, and faith-based organizations across the state work to instill a sense of resiliency, make space for recovery, and restore independence;

**NOW, THEREFORE**, I, Bill Lee, Governor of the State of Tennessee, do hereby proclaim May 2024 as

## *Mental Health 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 fourth day of April 2024.

*Bill Lee*

Governor

*Die Nargott*

Secretary of State