



STATE OF TENNESSEE

# PROCLAMATION

BY THE GOVERNOR

**WHEREAS**, premature birth affects one in every seven babies in Tennessee, and 196 babies are born preterm in an average week; and

**WHEREAS**, premature birth threatens the lives and health of more than half a million babies in the United States every year and is the leading cause of death among newborns; and

**WHEREAS**, millions of children face lifelong birth defects and intellectual disabilities as a consequence of being born too soon; and

**WHEREAS**, the March of Dimes continues to lead the fight against premature birth and serious threats to infant health by funding research and programs that benefit every baby born; and

**WHEREAS**, 13 million babies worldwide are born prematurely every year and one million of them die because they were born too soon; and

**WHEREAS**, organizations such as the March of Dimes Tennessee Chapter, the Tennessee Department of Health, the Tennessee Hospital Association, and the Tennessee Initiative for Perinatal Quality Care are working as a part of the Tennessee Healthy Babies are Worth the Wait partnership to improve the health of babies; and

**WHEREAS**, the Tennessee Department of Health has taken the challenge from the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials to reduce the incidence of premature birth in Tennessee by eight percent by the year 2014;

**NOW, THEREFORE**, I, Bill Haslam Governor of the State of Tennessee, do hereby proclaim the month of November 2012 as Prematurity Awareness Month, and November 17, 2012 as

## WORLD PREMATUREITY DAY

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 first day of November, 2012.



Handwritten signature of Bill Haslam in blue ink.

Governor

Handwritten signature of Joe Reger in blue ink.

Secretary of State