



STATE OF TENNESSEE
PROCLAMATION
BY THE GOVERNOR

WHEREAS, the Governor's Early Literacy Foundation (GELF) is an independent, non-partisan 501(c)3 organization headquartered in Nashville, Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, GELF was founded in 2004 by Governor Phil Bredesen, the Tennessee legislature, and community leaders as Governor's Books from Birth Foundation, with the mission to foster a love of reading in Tennessee by bringing Dolly Parton's Imagination Library program statewide; and

WHEREAS, for 20 years, Dolly Parton's Imagination Library in Tennessee and GELF have been made financially possible through a unique combination of public, private, and corporate funding, making Tennessee the first state in the nation to offer the Imagination Library in every county in partnership with local affiliates; and

WHEREAS, in recent years, GELF has evolved from a book-gifting organization to an early literacy leader serving children from birth through third grade, as well as their caregivers, teachers, and communities by partnering to provide books, resources, and programs to strengthen early literacy in Tennessee and build a brighter future for Tennessee's children at no cost to families; and

WHEREAS, GELF now pursues its mission through key programs and initiatives including Birth-5 Book Delivery through partnership with Dolly Parton's Imagination Library; K-3 Home Library; Caregiver Engagement; Book Buses; Storybook Trails; and the Statewide Early Literacy Education Collaborative of Tennessee (SELECT) as well as numerous special projects that expand GELF's reach to serve some of Tennessee's most vulnerable communities; and

WHEREAS, since 2004, GELF and its partners have sent approximately 56 million books to children across the state, and through the partnership and support from a statewide community, GELF has grown to serve approximately 600,000 children, 185,000 caregivers, and 13,000 teachers each year;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Bill Lee, Governor of the State of Tennessee, do hereby proclaim October 1, 2024 as a day of celebration honoring the

*20th Anniversary of the Governor's
Early Literacy Foundation*

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 twenty-seventh day of June, 2024.

Bill Lee

Governor

Joe Wargatt

Secretary of State