



STATE OF TENNESSEE  
**PROCLAMATION**  
BY THE GOVERNOR

**WHEREAS**, every Tennessean has the right to live free from harm and the fear of sexual assault or abuse; and

**WHEREAS**, no man, woman, or child has the right to force, coerce, threaten, or manipulate anyone into sexual activity; and

**WHEREAS**, sexual assault is a devastating crime that affects children, women, and men of all racial, cultural, and economic backgrounds in every community throughout Tennessee; and

**WHEREAS**, the rate of sexual violence against women is unacceptable, with one out of six Tennessee women having experienced sexual violence in their lifetime; and

**WHEREAS**, the crime of sexual assault violates an individual's humanity, dignity, security, and privacy, where victims often suffer in silence for fear of further injury, and in addition to the initial trauma, victims and survivors too often experience long lasting impacts such as feelings of shame, or difficulty in personal relationships; and

**WHEREAS**, with leadership, dedication, and encouragement, there is compelling evidence that we can be successful in reducing sexual violence in Tennessee through prevention, education, increased awareness, and holding perpetrators who commit acts of violence accountable for their actions; and

**WHEREAS**, we must honor those victims around us and celebrate the resiliency and successes of survivors who, despite great obstacles, are thriving in communities across Tennessee; and

**WHEREAS**, the State of Tennessee is committed to prevention and to providing law enforcement and support for victims and survivors;

**NOW, THEREFORE**, I, Bill Haslam, Governor of the State of Tennessee, do hereby proclaim the month of April 2013 as

*Sexual Assault 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 nineteenth day of April, 2013.

*Bill Haslam*

Governor

*Joe Hight*

Secretary of State