



STATE OF TENNESSEE

# PROCLAMATION

BY THE GOVERNOR

**WHEREAS**, Autism Spectrum Disorder is a developmental disability that can significantly impair an individual's ability to learn healthy interactive behaviors and understand verbal and nonverbal reciprocal communication; and

**WHEREAS**, Autism Spectrum Disorders affect young people and adults of every background, and millions of American families know the weight of their impact; and

**WHEREAS**, Autism Spectrum Disorders affect 1 in 88 children, more than 3 million individuals in the United States are affected; and

**WHEREAS**, more children will be diagnosed with autism than childhood cancer, juvenile diabetes or pediatric AIDS combined; and

**WHEREAS**, although a cure has not been found, persons with Autism can be helped to reach their greatest potential with accurate, early diagnosis and appropriate education; and

**WHEREAS**, Great strides have been made in our understanding of the autism spectrum, and today, children and adults with ASDs are leading independent and productive lives, though barriers still remain for these individuals and their families; and

**WHEREAS**, it is important to ensure persons living with ASDs have the opportunity to pursue their full measure of happiness and achieve their greatest potential;

**NOW, THEREFORE**, I, Bill Haslam, Governor of the State of Tennessee, do hereby proclaim the month of April, 2014, as

## *Autism 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 March, 2014.



*Bill Haslam*

Governor

*Joe Vitatt*

Secretary of State