



STATE OF TENNESSEE
PROCLAMATION

BY THE GOVERNOR

WHEREAS, nationally and in Tennessee fraud and financial abuse are greatly underreported, and there is a great need to educate and raise awareness of this devastating crime;

WHEREAS, fraud and identity theft are some of the most costly crimes Americans face. In 2013, according to data collected by the Federal Trade Commission, there were more than 1.4 million fraud and identity theft complaints representing more than \$1.6 billion in reported losses in the United States, with 21,757 of those complaints, representing more than \$21 million in reported losses, occurring in Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, the Division of Consumer Affairs within the Tennessee Department of Commerce and Insurance works tirelessly to address and mediate consumer complaints of unfair and deceptive practices and fraud, to return funds to consumers, and to work with the Attorney General's Office and other local, state and federal agencies, to help in the prosecution of fraud; and

WHEREAS, in Tennessee, it is a crime for a caretaker to misuse government funds of an elderly or disabled adult; and

WHEREAS, public awareness of this very costly problem is key to preventing further exploitation/abuse and loss of money; and

WHEREAS, the Tennessee Commission on Aging & Disability and the Adult Protective Services Division within the Tennessee Department of Human Services are responsible for awareness, prevention, investigation, and reporting of fraud and financial abuse crimes against elderly and disabled adults in Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, the statewide Tennessee Vulnerable Adult Coalition, and the regional coalitions in South Central, East, Upper Cumberland, Middle, West and Northeast Tennessee are grassroots organizations working to eliminate the costly crimes of fraud and financial abuse, to educate vulnerable adults about prevention strategies, to identify suspicious activities, to raise awareness of the red flags of financial exploitation, to encourage reporting of such crimes as fraud and financial abuse, and ultimately to reduce the rates of fraud and financial abuse among vulnerable adults; and

WHEREAS, the Tennessee Departments of Human Services and Commerce and Insurance, along with the Tennessee Commission on Aging & Disability declare fraud and financial abuse a state priority;

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

Fraud and Financial Exploitation 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 September, 2014.

Bill Haslam

Governor

Lee Hargett

Secretary of State