STATE OF TENNESSEE

PROCLAMATION

BY THE GOVERNOR

WHEREAS, nationwide approximately 5 million people have developmental disabilities; and

WHEREAS, more than 102,000 adults and children in Tennessee have developmental disabilities, and the vast majority of these individuals are primarily or solely supported throughout their lifespan by their families; and

WHEREAS, Tennesseans with and without disabilities live and work side by side in communities across Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, every person, regardless of ability, has valuable strengths, infinite capacity to learn and the potential to make important contributions to their local communities; and

WHEREAS, people with developmental disabilities in Tennessee share with the state's other six million residents the desire to achieve personal success through education, meaningful work and family and community ties; and

WHEREAS, people with developmental disabilities in Tennessee expect equal opportunities to participate in and enjoy belonging in their local communities alongside their neighbors without disabilities; and

WHEREAS, Tennessee is committed to encouraging innovation and higher expectations in how communities offer supports to individuals with disabilities and their families; and

WHEREAS, "Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month" is an appropriate time to recognize Tennessee's public policy accomplishments concerning persons with disabilities and to also identify the improvements to public policy that are needed to fully include all of Tennessee's citizens with developmental disabilities;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Bill Haslam, Governor of the State of Tennessee, do hereby proclaim March, 2016 as

Developmental Disabilities 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 sixteenth day of February, 2016.

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Governor

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Secretary of State