STATE OF ARKANSAS
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

PROCLAMATION

TO ALL TO WHOM THESE PRESENTS COME – GREETINGS:

WHEREAS: In 2016, suicide was the leading cause of violent death in Arkansas, and this state ranks 14th in the nation of suicides per capita; and

WHEREAS: The 91st General Assembly of Arkansas mandated that the Arkansas Department of Health establish and maintain a suicide prevention hotline; and

WHEREAS: The 90th General Assembly of Arkansas designated the Arkansas Department of Health as the agency for the purposes of suicide prevention and state and federal programmatic and funding applications; and

WHEREAS: In the United States someone dies by suicide approximately every 12 minutes and in Arkansas, on average, every 16 hours. Suicide is the leading cause of injury-related death in the state; and

WHEREAS: More than twice as many people die by suicide in Arkansas annually than from homicide; the total deaths to suicide reflect a total of 11,012 years of potential life lost before age 65; and

WHEREAS: Suicide affects everyone, but some groups are at higher risk than others in Arkansas. Men are three times more likely than women to die from suicide. However, women are more likely to express suicidal thoughts and to make nonfatal attempts than men. In the United States, the prevalence of suicidal thoughts, suicide planning, and suicide attempts is significantly higher among young adults aged 18-29 years than it is among adults 30 years and older. Suicide is the second leading cause of death for ages 15-34 years of age; and

WHEREAS: Collaborative statewide suicide prevention efforts should be utilized and encouraged to the maximum extent possible. The stigma associated with mental illness and thoughts of suicide works against suicide prevention efforts by discouraging persons at risk for suicide from seeking life-saving help and by further traumatizing survivors of suicide; and

WHEREAS: The State of Arkansas is dedicated to reducing the frequency of suicide attempts and deaths and to easing the pain of survivors affected by the deaths of loved ones who have died by suicide through extensive training, educational programming, and collaboration with all parties who have a vested interest in suicide prevention; and

WHEREAS: Suicide is a national and state public health problem, and suicide prevention is a statewide priority. No single suicide prevention program or effort will be appropriate for all populations or communities, and the State of Arkansas encourages initiatives based on the goals contained in the Arkansas Strategy for Suicide Prevention, which is consistent with the National Strategy for Suicide Prevention;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, ASA HUTCHINSON, Governor of the State of Arkansas, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the laws of the State of Arkansas, do hereby proclaim September 2018, as

SUICIDE PREVENTION AWARENESS MONTH

and September 9th through September 15th, 2018, as

SUICIDE PREVENTION AWARENESS WEEK

across the State, and I encourage my fellow citizens to join in this important observance recognizing that many suicides are preventable and to please call 1-800-273-TALK if they find themselves in crisis.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Arkansas to be affixed this 31st day of July, in the year of our Lord 2018.

Asa Hutchinson, Governor

Attest:

Mark Martin, Secretary Of State