

STATE OF ARKANSAS

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

PROCLAMATION

TO ALL TO WHOM THESE PRESENTS COME – GREETINGS:

WHEREAS: Premature birth is the leading cause of death in newborn babies. Prematurity is defined as birth before 37 completed weeks of gestation. Premature babies who survive may suffer immediate complications and often face lifelong health problems, such as learning disabilities, vision and hearing impairment, and cerebral palsy; and

WHEREAS: There were 37,076 live births in Arkansas in 2017, and of those 4,201 babies were born preterm, representing 11.3 percent of all state births; and

WHEREAS: Prematurity and birth defects are the leading causes of infant mortality in Arkansas with 1,161 babies born with a birth defect on average, and 304 babies died before reaching their first birthday in 2016; and

WHEREAS: In Pulaski County, there were 5,205 live births, with 578 or 11.1 percent of those born preterm in 2017; and

WHEREAS: In Arkansas, preventing a premature birth could mean an annual savings of up to \$217 million; and

WHEREAS: The month of November is recognized as World Prematurity Awareness Month to bring about recognition of this global health crisis, and November 17th is recognized as Prematurity Awareness Day across the United States;

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 November 17th, 2018, as

PREMATURITY AWARENESS DAY IN ARKANSAS

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Arkansas to be affixed this 15th day of October, in the year of our Lord 2018.



Asa Hutchinson, Governor

Attest

Mark Martin, Secretary Of State