

**STATE OF ARKANSAS**  
**EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT**

**PROCLAMATION**

TO ALL TO WHOM THESE PRESENTS COME – GREETINGS:

WHEREAS: Birth defects are common, costly, and critical; and

WHEREAS: Birth defects affect an estimated 1,100 infants (about 3 percent of all births) in Arkansas each year; and

WHEREAS: Birth defects are a leading cause of death in the first year of life; and

WHEREAS: Birth defects can occur in any family regardless of race, ethnicity, health history, or economic status; and

WHEREAS: Steps can be taken to reduce the chance that a child will be born with a birth defect, such as taking a daily vitamin with folic acid before and during pregnancy, getting regular prenatal care, becoming up-to-date with vaccinations, reaching a healthy weight before pregnancy, and stopping the use of alcohol or drugs during pregnancy; and

WHEREAS: Early identification of a child with a birth defect coupled with early intervention services typically improves the child's quality of life;

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 January 2020, as

**NATIONAL BIRTH DEFECTS PREVENTION MONTH**

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Arkansas to be affixed this 17<sup>th</sup> day of December, in the year of our Lord 2019.



Asa Hutchinson, Governor



Attest:



John Thurston, Secretary Of State