

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

**PROCLAMATION**

TO ALL TO WHOM THESE PRESENTS COME – GREETINGS:

WHEREAS: The current opioid epidemic is one of the deadliest drug epidemics in American history, affecting every sex, race, class, and age; and

WHEREAS: Drug overdose, from prescription and illegal drugs combined, is the leading cause of unintentional injury deaths in the US; and

WHEREAS: More than 107,622 Americans died from drug overdoses in 2021, including illicit drugs and prescription opioids. From 1999 to 2020, 932,000 people in the United States have died from drug overdoses; and

WHEREAS: Over the last four years, the opioid epidemic has cost the U.S. economy \$2.5 trillion; and

WHEREAS: Arkansas's overdose death rate for 2021 was 20.52 for every 100,000 Arkansans; and

WHEREAS: Arkansas has the second-highest opioid prescribing rate in the US; and

WHEREAS: Drug addiction is a complex public health and public safety problem which requires a collaborative effort to solve—from prevention and early identification to treatment and recovery; and

WHEREAS: Local, state, and federal law enforcement, education, government, health, and other agencies in Arkansas partner to provide education and awareness on "Chasing the Dragon" and opioid drug abuse; and

WHEREAS: In Arkansas, we seek to raise awareness and prevent new victims from falling prey to addiction, to reinforce our commitment to holding those that contribute to this epidemic accountable, and to ensure access to treatment for those battling addiction;

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 October 26<sup>th</sup>, 2022, as

**CHASING THE DRAGON OPIOID AWARENESS DAY IN ARKANSAS**

across the State, and I call upon political leaders, law enforcement and medical communities, community leaders, and citizens to raise awareness of this issue which is devastating so many individuals and families in our State and nation.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Arkansas to be affixed this 30<sup>th</sup> day of September, in the year of our Lord 2022.



  
Asa Hutchinson, Governor

  
John Thurston, Secretary of State