



STATE OF TENNESSEE

PROCLAMATION

BY THE GOVERNOR

WHEREAS, suicide is one of the leading causes of preventable death in the United States, and each day we lose three Tennesseans to this tragedy; and

WHEREAS, a public health crisis, suicide is the third-leading cause of death for middle and high school age youth (ages 12-18) and college age youth (ages 18-22) in our state; and

WHEREAS, Tennessee is a national leader in suicide prevention efforts through collaborations with local suicide prevention nonprofit organizations, the Department of Education, and other state agencies; and

WHEREAS, suicide prevention begins with raising awareness and providing tools, information, and resources to help identify Tennesseans who may be struggling with thoughts of suicide; and

WHEREAS, efforts across Tennessee to raise awareness and offer training on the warning signs of suicide in youth have recently reduced suicide from the second to third leading cause of death for ages 12-18; and

WHEREAS, prevention efforts are working but could be undone by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and resulting social and emotional repercussions; and

WHEREAS, a mental health crisis due to the COVID-19 pandemic is imminent, and conversations about mental health and suicide need to be brought into the open; and

WHEREAS, The Jason Foundation, Inc., a Tennessee-based nonprofit organization dedicated to fighting the "silent epidemic" of youth suicide across the nation through educational programs for young people, educators, parents, and other community groups, has launched a new campaign, "Tennessee Won't Be Silent," to increase awareness and availability of resources for mental health; and

WHEREAS, "Tennessee Won't Be Silent" is a collaborative effort including partners from business, government, nonprofits, and the community lending their talents and passion to an array of mental health awareness programs and projects throughout the year; and

WHEREAS, the "Tennessee Won't Be Silent" campaign aims to share the message that suicide is preventable and enable Tennesseans to reach out for help for themselves, loved ones, and friends; and

WHEREAS, as Governor of Tennessee, I have declared September 2020 as Suicide Prevention Month in the state of Tennessee;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Bill Lee, Governor of the State of Tennessee, do hereby recognize September 6-12, 2020 as

"Tennessee Won't Be Silent" Week

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 twentieth day of August, 2020.

Bill Lee

Governor

