



# CERTIFICATE of RECOGNITION

*By virtue of the authority vested by the Constitution of Virginia in the Governor of the Commonwealth of Virginia, there is hereby officially recognized:*

## **NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION WEEK**

**WHEREAS**, suicide is a public health concern; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2019, 1,140 Virginians died by suicide, making suicide the 9<sup>th</sup> leading cause of death in the Commonwealth and the 2<sup>nd</sup> leading cause of death for ages 10-24; and

**WHEREAS**, public awareness of the warning signs and the networks available for at-risk individuals are essential to continue lowering the rates of suicide; and

**WHEREAS**, reducing the stigma through discussion and by increasing the awareness of available resources encourages help-seeking behaviors and helps attempt survivors and survivors of suicide loss in their personal healing; and

**WHEREAS**, the Commonwealth encourages community conversations around mental health, including incorporating the Lock and Talk Virginia initiatives into a statewide comprehensive approach to suicide prevention; and

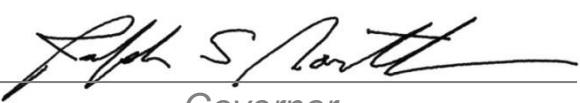
**WHEREAS**, Virginia acknowledges the prevalence of suicide among our military servicewomen and men and Veterans. The Virginia Governor's Challenge to Prevent Suicide for Military Service Members, Veterans and Families focuses on a public health approach to provide outreach and support to military and veteran families where they live, work, and thrive in local communities; and

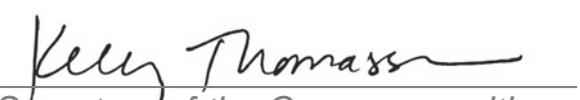
**WHEREAS**, the Suicide Prevention Interagency Advisory Group, jointly-facilitated by the Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services and the Virginia Department of Health, coordinates efforts throughout the Commonwealth to strengthen capacity across multiple agencies and organizations, to help impact our ability to reduce the risk of suicide across the lifespan, working towards a comprehensive statewide suicide prevention model; and

**WHEREAS**, Virginia's agencies and organizations are working collaboratively to help reduce the risk of suicide across a person's lifespan;

**NOW, THEREFORE**, I, Ralph S. Northam, do hereby recognize September 5-11, 2021 as **NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION WEEK** in our **COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA**, and I call this observance to the attention of all our citizens.



  
Governor

  
Secretary of the Commonwealth