

**A Proclamation**  
**By**  
**Governor Ronnie Musgrove**

**WHEREAS**, autism is a lifelong, incapacitating, developmental disability, resulting in significant impairment of an individual's ability to learn, develop healthy interactive behaviors, and understand verbal, nonverbal and reciprocal communications; and

**WHEREAS**, autism is the third most common developmental disability, affecting more than 1,500,000 individuals nationwide, and approximately 11,000 individuals in this state; and

**WHEREAS**, autism is the result of a neurological disorder affecting the functioning of the brain, but few members of the general public understand this complex syndrome; and

**WHEREAS**, although a cure for Autism has not been found, persons with Autism can be helped to reach their greatest potential—accurate, early diagnosis and the resulting appropriate education and interventions are vital to the future growth and development of the individual; and

**WHEREAS**, advocacy organizations such as TEAAM (Together Enhancing Autism Awareness in Mississippi), have dedicated years of service in their ongoing efforts to advocate for the rights, humane treatment, and appropriate education of all persons with Autism; and

**WHEREAS**, this group remains committed to its cause and to educating families, professionals, and the general public to better understand this lifelong disability; and

**WHEREAS**, autism is a complex disability that requires increased research to one day find a cure and prevention, and greater recognition and understanding to ensure that individuals with autism living in Mississippi and all other Americans with autism are accurately diagnosed and appropriately treated throughout their lives:

**NOW, THEREFORE**, I, Ronnie Musgrove, Governor of the State of Mississippi, hereby proclaim April 26, 2003, as

**Autism Awareness Day**

in the State of Mississippi and I urge all citizens to join me in recognizing the achievements made and to continue these efforts by promoting the awareness and fostering the understanding of autism.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Mississippi to be affixed.

DONE in the City of Jackson, April 16, 2003 in the two hundred and twenty-sixth year of the United States of America.

**RONNIE MUSGROVE**  
**GOVERNOR**