



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:

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH

WHEREAS, the effects of domestic violence harm every aspect of our community including our schools, military, healthcare system, and economy; and

WHEREAS, individuals can become survivors of domestic violence regardless of age, gender identity, sexual orientation, race, culture, socioeconomic status, or religion; and

WHEREAS, family and intimate partner homicides continue to represent over one-third of all homicides in the Commonwealth, and without intervention, cycles of violence can perpetuate through generations; and

WHEREAS, requests for sexual and domestic violence services in Virginia have dramatically increased as a direct result of the COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, in 2020, 70,252 survivors received help from Hotline advocates and 5,762 adults and children received 216,978 nights of emergency shelter due to domestic violence; and

WHEREAS, in 1981, Virginian's Aligned Against Sexual Assault (VAASA) and Virginian's Against Domestic Violence (VADV) were founded to establish the first ever state-level and coalition-based response to sexual and domestic violence in Virginia; and

WHEREAS, in 2004, VAASA and VADV merged to become the Virginia Sexual & Domestic Violence Action Alliance (Action Alliance), a broad coalition who believe that all people have the right to a life free of sexual and domestic violence; and

WHEREAS, it is critical that those seeking help or services have access to appropriate, equitable, trauma-informed care and services; and

WHEREAS, Domestic Violence Awareness Month is an opportunity for domestic violence advocacy agencies, systems-partners, communities, and allies to stand with domestic violence survivors to celebrate the progress made in responding to harm, and to support measures to prevent domestic violence in the Commonwealth before it can occur;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Ralph S. Northam, do hereby recognize October 2021 as **DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH** in our **COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA**, and I call this observance to the attention of all our citizens.




Governor


Secretary of the Commonwealth