

# Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month

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03/01/2018

**WHEREAS**, within the United States, one in six, or about 15%, of children aged three through 17 have one or more developmental disabilities; and

**WHEREAS**, in the Commonwealth, there are approximately 134,000 people with developmental disabilities; and

**WHEREAS**, Virginians with developmental disabilities are our neighbors, family members, coworkers, and friends and important contributors to the diversity of our communities and our Commonwealth; and

**WHEREAS**, when individuals with developmental disabilities are included and active in their communities, they live longer, healthier, and more fulfilling lives; and

**WHEREAS**, Virginians with developmental disabilities have the right to vote, attend college, work in real jobs earning competitive wages, live healthy integrated lives in the community, and be fully included in all facets of society without experiencing unnecessary barriers to full participation; and

**WHEREAS**, the Commonwealth has created and continues to increase community-based services and supports that allow Virginians with developmental disabilities to live, work, and thrive in the community; and

**WHEREAS**, Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month is a time to recognize the contributions of Virginians with developmental disabilities and the Commonwealth's efforts to identify and remove barriers to inclusion for all Virginians; and

**WHEREAS**, removing these barriers for individuals with developmental disabilities benefits the entire Commonwealth and is a part of our commitment to providing equal opportunity, and rights for all Virginians;

**NOW, THEREFORE**, I, Ralph S. Northam, do hereby recognize March 2018 as **DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES AWARENESS MONTH** in our **COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA**, and I call this observance to the attention of all our citizens.