

STATE OF MICHIGAN



CERTIFICATE OF PROCLAMATION

ON BEHALF OF THE PEOPLE OF MICHIGAN,
I, Gretchen Whitmer, governor of Michigan, do hereby proclaim

April 2023

as

AUTISM ACCEPTANCE MONTH

WHEREAS, Autism Spectrum Disorder is the fastest growing developmental disability in the United States, affecting more than five million people; and,

WHEREAS, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report 1 in 44 children may have Autism; and,

WHEREAS, youth with Autism have been identified as the primary emerging population of individuals with a disability in Michigan as either currently or predicted to be underserved. It is an urgent public health crisis that demands state and national responses; and,

WHEREAS, Autism is a neurological and developmental disorder characterized by social impairment and restricted interactive and communication behaviors, and can affect anyone, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, or socioeconomic background; and,

WHEREAS, symptoms and characteristics of Autism may present in a variety of combinations and can result in significant, lifelong challenges in areas of learning, social-interactive behaviors, and understanding verbal as well as nonverbal communications; and,

WHEREAS, as the effort to address Autism continues, physicians, psychologists, behavior analysts, speech and language pathologists, occupational therapists, vocational rehabilitation professionals, and educators can assist persons with Autism and their families through provision of early identification, as well as the resulting appropriate education, intervention, and recreational opportunities that are vital to further growth and development; and,

WHEREAS, it is also important to ensure that persons living with Autism have access to the lifelong supports and services needed to pursue the full measure of personal happiness, independence, and community inclusion to achieve their greatest potential; and,

WHEREAS, much more can be done to better support individuals with Autism as they look to obtain, maintain, and advance in an employment pathway; including collaborating among state agencies and partner groups, providing individualized and customized support, offering comprehensive training, and conducting better advocacy and outreach strategies; and,

WHEREAS, advocates in Michigan and nationwide have long celebrated April as Autism Awareness Month, we recognize that, while awareness promotes better understanding, acceptance is what is needed to inspire inclusion and changes to ensure individuals with Autism are treated with dignity and respect and are able to participate fully in society; and,

WHEREAS, Michigan is honored to celebrate the many ways individuals with Autism enhance the quality of our communities, fostering acceptance and a sense of belonging as we work together to create a more welcoming and inclusive state for all;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Gretchen Whitmer, governor of Michigan, do hereby proclaim April 2023 as Autism Acceptance Month in Michigan.

Garlin Gilchrist II
Lieutenant Governor

Gretchen Whitmer
Governor

