



State of North Carolina

ROY COOPER
GOVERNOR

HEARING LOSS AWARENESS MONTH

2021

BY THE GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

A PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, after arthritis and heart disease, hearing loss is the third most common physical condition, affecting more than 1.2 million North Carolinians ages 18 or older and an estimated 1.6 million by 2030; and

WHEREAS, North Carolina is home to the largest percentage of veterans in the country, 60 percent of whom return home with hearing loss and tinnitus; and

WHEREAS, untreated hearing loss is associated with poorer overall health, including cardiovascular risk, cognitive decline, dementia, brain shrinkage, diabetes, balance disorders, and depression, and can lead socially engaged adults to become isolated and withdrawn as their hearing loss progresses; and

WHEREAS, COVID-19 safety protocols such as wearing face masks and social distancing create significant additional communication barriers to people with hearing loss; the use of clear masks by professionals and community members who work with and serve people with hearing loss greatly enhances communication; and

WHEREAS, hearing loss has become a critical health care issue and efforts should be made to screen and treat everyone for hearing loss as part of routine medical care; and

WHEREAS, identifying and treating hearing loss early can lower health risks, improve quality of life, and help reduce overall health care costs for all North Carolinians; and

WHEREAS, screening infants and children for hearing loss provides early access to language development, curricula, and resources, ensuring they can lead full and productive lives; and

WHEREAS, there are many services, supports, and resources that can enhance the lives of those with hearing loss in our communities; and

WHEREAS, the North Carolina Institute of Medicine, in partnership with the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services – Division of Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, convened a task force on “Access to Health Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing in Health Settings” and published a final report in 2020 that identified 14 recommendations to be used to ensure communication equity in healthcare settings; and

WHEREAS, the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, statewide consumer advocacy groups, the Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Program under the Division of Public Health, the Division of Services for the Deaf and the Hard of Hearing, and the Hearing Loss Association of America-North Carolina Chapter all work to improve the lives of those with hearing loss;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, ROY COOPER, Governor of the State of North Carolina, do hereby proclaim May, 2021, as “**HEARING LOSS AWARENESS MONTH**” in North Carolina, and commend its observance to all citizens.





Roy Cooper
Governor

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the Great Seal of the State of North Carolina at the Capitol in Raleigh this twenty-third day of April in the year of our Lord two thousand and twenty-one and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and forty-fifth.