

Janice K. Brewer
Governor

Office of the Governor

*** BIRTH DEFECTS PREVENTION MONTH ***

WHEREAS, the nation's most precious resource is our children. Congenital anomalies or birth defects are a leading cause of death in the first year of life and can be devastating to families and communities; and

WHEREAS, every four and a half minutes a baby is born in the United States with a birth defect. Birth defects cause one in a every five infant deaths and lead to \$2.6 billion per year in hospital costs alone in the United States. In Arizona birth defects account for about 130 infant deaths every year; and

WHEREAS, half of all pregnancies are unplanned, contributing to late entry into prenatal care and presenting a barrier to optimal pregnancy management, particularly during the crucial early weeks of embryonic development; and

WHEREAS, early identification of a child with a birth defect coupled with early intervention services typically improves the child's quality of life and may even save his or her life; and

WHEREAS, strategies to prevent birth defects include taking a multivitamin with folic acid daily, maintaining a healthy weight, having regular checkups, avoiding alcohol and tobacco use during pregnancy, learning about family history and genetic risks, and managing maternal medical conditions while minimizing unnecessary medication exposure in pregnancy; and

WHEREAS, the Arizona Department of Health Services (Prevention Services, Newborn Screening and the Birth Defects Monitoring Program) joins with the March of Dimes Arizona Chapter, Arizona Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, the Association of the National Birth Defects Prevention Network, as well as many dedicated volunteers, healthcare professionals, and parent groups by participating in this promotion.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Janice K. Brewer, Governor of the State of Arizona, do hereby proclaim January 2014 as

*** BIRTH DEFECTS PREVENTION MONTH ***

and, I further encourage all citizens to increase awareness, education and services for birth defects, which each year affect thousands of babies in Arizona.

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



Janice K. Brewer

GOVERNOR

DONE at the Capitol in Phoenix on this ninth day of December in the year Two Thousand and Thirteen, and of the Independence of the United States of America the Two Hundred and Thirty-eighth.

ATTEST:

Ken Blumenthal

Secretary of State