By virtue of the authority vested by the Constitution of Virginia in the Governor of the Commonwealth of Virginia, there is hereby officially recognized:

FAMILY REUNIFICATION MONTH

WHEREAS, foster care is intended to be a temporary intervention for children who need the safety and security of an out-of-home placement; and

WHEREAS, 2,743 children entered foster care in Virginia in 2018; and

WHEREAS, many families receiving foster care services are faced with challenges in overcoming trauma and meeting day-to-day needs; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia Children’s Service Practice Model states that all children and youth deserve to be safe; children do best when raised in families; and all children and youth deserve and need a permanent family; and

WHEREAS, there were 760 children and youth in foster care in Virginia who were successfully reunified with their families in 2018; and

WHEREAS, for most children in foster care, reunification with their family is their best option for a permanent and loving home; and

WHEREAS, all children need the care, love, security, and stability of family unity, including parents, siblings, grandparents and other extended family members, to provide a solid foundation for personal growth, development, and maturity; and

WHEREAS, reunification takes work, commitment, and investment of time and resources by parents, family members, family service specialists, foster parents, service providers, attorneys, courts and the community; and

WHEREAS, the accomplishments of families who overcome challenges to reunify safely and successfully should be supported and celebrated;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Ralph S. Northam, do hereby recognize June 2019 as FAMILY REUNIFICATION MONTH in our COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA, and I call this observance to the attention of all our citizens.