

# State of South Carolina

## Governor's Proclamation

WHEREAS, folic acid is a B vitamin that helps prevent birth defects of the brain and spine, including spina bifida, anencephaly, and encephalocele; and

WHEREAS, since 1992, the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control, South Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, South Carolina Developmental Disabilities Council, South Carolina Department of Disabilities and Special Needs, Centers for Disease Control, and Greenwood Genetic Center have worked together through the South Carolina Birth Defects Surveillance and Prevention Program to reduce the rate of neural tube defects in the Palmetto State; and

WHEREAS, this partnership has reduced the rate of neural tube defects in South Carolina from twice the national average to below the national average, earning the South Carolina Birth Defects Surveillance and Prevention Program the 2002 State Leadership Award from the National Birth Defects Prevention Network and the Birth Defects Education and Prevention Award for 2008; and

WHEREAS, the annual observance of Birth Defects Awareness Month acknowledges that most pregnancies are unplanned and encourages women to recognize the importance of taking 400 micrograms of folic acid "every day for someday."

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Henry McMaster, Governor of the great State of South Carolina, do hereby proclaim January 2024 as

### BIRTH DEFECTS AWARENESS MONTH

throughout the state and encourage all South Carolinians to recognize the partners of the South Carolina Birth Defects Surveillance and Prevention Program for their efforts to reduce neural tube defects in the Palmetto State.



**HENRY McMASTER**  
**GOVERNOR**  
**STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA**