**PROCLAMATION DECLARING**

**MAY 2024**

**“MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH”**

**WHEREAS*,*** mental health is part of overall holistic health; and

**WHEREAS,** one in five adults experience a mental health problem in any given year; and

**WHEREAS,** approximately one-half of chronic mental illness begins by the age of 14 and three-quarters by age 24; and

**WHEREAS,** suicide is the 10th leading cause of death in the United States and the 2nd leading cause of death among young adults, and 90% of people who die by suicide have an underlying mental illness; and

**WHEREAS,** text messages to the federal disaster distress hotline increased **1,000%** in 2020; and,

**WHEREAS,** many Americans and Floridians are experiencing mental health challenges that they have never experienced before and need assistance to navigate the mental health system; and

**WHEREAS,** this does not include the significant ripple effect on their families and friends. The impact of mental illness reaches families, neighborhoods, schools, the workplaces; and

**WHEREAS,** an important part of educating the community and erasing stigma is raising awareness around the fact that mental health services are inclusive of other services besides a therapist or a medication prescriber. Mental health services include services and supports that help individuals with mental illness recover holistically, inclusive of their social, vocational, and community contributions; and

**WHEREAS,** mental health services support not only the individuals who live with a mental illness, but also are beneficial to their families, friends and the community at large by decreasing homelessness, hospitalizations, and criminalization of the mentally ill - all of which impose a significant emotional, mental and financial cost to our community; and

**WHEREAS,** each business, school, government agency, healthcare provider, organization, park and recreation agency, and citizen share the burden of mental illnesses and have a responsibility to promote mental wellness and support prevention efforts; and

**NOW, THEREFORE,** I, , \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of the \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, do hereby proclaim May 2024 as Mental Health Awareness Month, and call upon the citizens, government agencies, park and recreation agencies, public and private institutions, businesses, and schools in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, to recommit our community to increasing awareness and understanding of mental health, and the steps our citizens can take to shine a light on mental illness, fight stigma, provide support, educate the public and advocate for equal care.