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

ADULT ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH

WHEREAS, during fiscal year 2020, Virginia Adult Protective Services received over 37,000 reports of adult abuse, neglect, and exploitation, a 9.6 percent increase from the previous year; and

WHEREAS, older Virginians and Virginians with disabilities may be targets for abuse, which can occur in families and communities of all social, economic, racial, and ethnic backgrounds; and

WHEREAS, in order to reduce the incidence of adult abuse in Virginia, there are a number of prevention programs that provide vital services to at risk populations including a 24-hour hotline, crisis intervention, emergency shelter, home-based and community services, public education, and legal advocacy; and

WHEREAS, local departments of social services used technology and creativity to reach survivors of maltreatment during the COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, Adult Abuse Prevention Month offers Virginians the opportunity to participate in community efforts to improve the safety and well-being of people throughout our Commonwealth, to recognize the organizations and individuals who serve them, and to remember those affected by adult abuse; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services, home to the State Adult Protective Services Division, collaborates with local departments of social services to help older Virginians and Virginians with disabilities live free of abuse, neglect, or exploitation;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Ralph S. Northam, do hereby recognize May 2021 as ADULT ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH in our COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA, and I call this observance to the attention of all our citizens.