

STATE OF MISSISSIPPI

Office of the Governor



PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, Usher Syndrome is a rare genetic disorder caused by a mutation in any one of nine or ten different genes resulting in a combination of hearing loss and visual impairment, and is a leading cause of combined deafness and blindness; and

WHEREAS, according to the Usher Syndrome Coalition, more than 400,000 people are affected by this genetic disorder worldwide, with at least 25,000 of those in the United States; and

WHEREAS, Usher Syndrome, which presently is incurable, impacts three major senses in the body:

Vision: Vision loss in Usher Syndrome is caused by a progressive vision disorder known as retinitis pigmentosa (RP). RP causes the light-sensing cells in the retina to gradually deteriorate, initially resulting in night blindness, followed by a narrowing of the visual field, commonly known as tunnel vision.

Hearing: Children with Usher Syndrome are born with or develop hearing loss. It is estimated that upward of 10 percent of people with congenital bilateral, sensorineural hearing loss have Usher Syndrome.

Balance: Balance is achieved and maintained through input from one's eyes, the vestibular organs in the inner ear, and the sensory systems of the body, such as the skin, muscles, and joints. Thus, people with Usher Syndrome suffer from severe balance issues due to vestibular dysfunction; and

WHEREAS, there are three clinical types: Type 1, Type 2, and Type 3, which are distinguished by the severity and age when the signs and symptoms appear, and there are at least eleven different genetic types of Usher Syndrome, as determined by the genes that are involved. One cannot determine the genetic type by clinical testing, as DNA testing is the only reliable way of determining the true genetic type; and

WHEREAS, because of limited public awareness, those affected with Usher Syndrome may suffer with depression, anxiety, isolation, and loss of independence; and

WHEREAS, in 2015, the Usher Syndrome Coalition, an organization of individuals and families working to build a global Usher Syndrome community, declared the third Saturday in September as the global "Usher Syndrome Awareness Day" to bring awareness about the most common genetic cause of combined deafness and blindness.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Tate Reeves, Governor of the State of Mississippi, do hereby designate the third Saturday in September 2025, as

USHER SYNDROME AWARENESS DAY

in the State of Mississippi.



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

DONE in the City of Jackson, on the 7th day of August in the year of our Lord, two thousand and twenty-five, and of the Independence of the United States of America, the two hundred and fiftieth.


TATE REEVES
GOVERNOR