



# CERTIFICATE of RECOGNITION

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

## **RACIAL TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION WEEK**

**WHEREAS**, every Virginian must reckon with the truth of our historical past, as well as our explicit and implicit contribution to the institution of American slavery and the subsequent racial inequity of today; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2007, the Commonwealth of Virginia, once known as the heart of the confederacy during the Civil War, voted unanimously to issue the first national apology and “profound regret” for the state’s role in the enslavement and exploitation of Africans and Native Virginia Indians; and

**WHEREAS**, in August 2019, the Commonwealth of Virginia commemorated the first documented “20 and odd” enslaved Africans that arrived at the English colonies at Old Point Comfort, Virginia, on the English ships *White Lion* and *Treasurer*; and

**WHEREAS**, Virginians have an important role to play in setting the standard for racial harmony in our everyday lives because racism and all subsequent systems of oppression have endemically influenced nearly every component of everyday living; and

**WHEREAS**, every Virginia family and child needs a community that is culturally inclusive, responsive, affirming, sustaining, and empowering; and

**WHEREAS**, Virginia leaders must intentionally dismantle systems and structures of oppression so that all residents can equally access and benefit from all social determinants of health, positive connections, and caring environments that are free from prejudice and discrimination; and

**WHEREAS**, racial trauma refers to the stressful impact or emotional pain of one’s experience with racism and discrimination, and it can have a negative impact on an individual’s physical, mental, and socioemotional health across their lifespan; and

**WHEREAS**, consequences of historical trauma are reflected in institutional, cultural, and environmental structures; and

**WHEREAS**, building and creating inclusive and affirming communities begins with social progress, which occurs when society stands alongside those who experience injustice; and

**WHEREAS**, dismantling systems of oppression will positively change the way in which trauma impacts the everyday experiences of communities of color; and

**WHEREAS**, the Commonwealth of Virginia encourages all individuals, families, groups, state agencies, and organizations to work together to advance racial equity and empower the voices and experiences of historically marginalized and underrepresented communities in acknowledgement of truth to promote healing, reconciliation, and justice;

**NOW, THEREFORE**, I, Ralph S. Northam, do hereby recognize August 2-8, 2020, as **RACIAL TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION WEEK** in our **COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA**, and I call this observance to the attention of all our citizens.



  
Governor

  
Secretary of the Commonwealth