

# COPD AWARENESS MONTH

WHEREAS: Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) is a slow, progressive and irreversible disease of the airways that affects over 16 million Americans. COPD includes chronic bronchitis and emphysema or a combination of these conditions; and

WHEREAS: The symptoms of COPD include chronic coughing, severe disabling shortness of breath, chest tightness, increased effort to breathe, increased pulmonary secretions and frequent clearing of the throat. As the disease progresses, the airways and alveoli in the lungs lose elasticity and the airway walls collapse, closing off smaller airways and narrowing larger ones; and

WHEREAS: Risk factors for COPD include long-term smoking, which is responsible for 80–90 percent of all cases, a family history of COPD, exposure to second-hand smoke or air pollution and a history of childhood respiratory infections; and

WHEREAS: COPD is the fourth leading cause of death in the nation and is projected to become the third leading cause of death by 2020. It is the only chronic illness with a rising death rate; and

WHEREAS: Although no cure for COPD exists, proper treatment can provide relief to those diagnosed; however, it is estimated that millions of people have undiagnosed cases of COPD. With an increase in public awareness, more Americans will be able to understand how to prevent and detect this deadly disease; now

THEREFORE: I, SONNY PERDUE, Governor of the State of Georgia, do hereby proclaim November 2003 as COPD AWARENESS MONTH in Georgia and encourage all Georgians to become aware of this disease and its prevention.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the Executive Department to be affixed this third day of November in the year of our Lord two thousand three.