

## ARBOR DAY

WHEREAS: Arbor Day began in 1872 as a celebration in Nebraska for planting trees and has grown to thousands of celebrations in communities across our nation each year; and

WHEREAS: Trees provide shade and habitat for wildlife, improve air and water quality, reduce the erosion of precious topsoil, increase property values and economic vitality in business areas, contribute to a sense of community pride and ownership and add beauty to our neighborhoods; and

WHEREAS: Urban and community forest programs greatly benefit the citizens of Georgia cities and towns by contributing to the preservation of precious greenspace; planning for and managing community trees; and promoting the planting and care of trees along streets and highways, in parks and at schools; and

WHEREAS: All 159 Georgia counties benefit from forestry, which contributes more than \$30 billion annually to our state's economy and provides employment for more than 204,000 people; now

THEREFORE: I, SONNY PERDUE, Governor of the State of Georgia, do hereby proclaim February 21, 2003, as **ARBOR DAY** in Georgia and encourage our citizens to plant trees, thus promoting the well-being of present and future generations.

In witness thereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the Executive Department to be affixed this 12th day of February in the year of our Lord two thousand three.