



Proclamation

By the Governor of Alabama

WHEREAS, rheumatic diseases are chronic, progressive, painful conditions and the leading cause of disability in the United States; and

WHEREAS, rheumatic diseases now affect one in four Americans and are expected to affect an estimated 78 million Americans by the year 2040; and

WHEREAS, 300,000 children live with some form of rheumatic disease; and

WHEREAS, it is estimated that the economic burden of rheumatic disease is at least \$128 billion annually, including more than \$80 billion in medical expenditures and \$47 billion in annual indirect costs such as lost earnings; and

WHEREAS, the symptoms of rheumatic diseases vary depending on the individual and the disease, but may include joint or muscle pain, inflammation, swelling, redness or stiffness, eye irritation and inflammation, general fatigue, malaise and fevers, hair loss, dry eyes or mouth, chest pain, seizures or stroke; and

WHEREAS, research suggests the cause of rheumatic disease is a combination of genetic and environmental factors, but the exact cause of these diseases is still unknown; and

WHEREAS, rheumatologists, researchers, patients, caregivers and other advocates are working to improve the quality of life for people living with rheumatic diseases; and

WHEREAS, there is currently no cure for rheumatic diseases, but medical research breakthroughs have led treatments and therapies that can dramatically improve the quality of life for those living with rheumatic diseases; and

WHEREAS, healthcare policies, research, education and community support services are needed to ensure patients receive timely, affordable, safe and effective treatments and have access to trained rheumatologists who can provide quality care to those living with these diseases:

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Kay Ivey, Governor of Alabama, do hereby proclaim September 2017, as

Rheumatic Disease Awareness Month

in the State of Alabama.

Given Under My Hand and the Great Seal of the
Office of the Governor at the State Capitol in the City
of Montgomery on the 1st day of September 2017.


Kay Ivey, Governor

