

WHEREAS, the March of Dimes Foundation is a pioneer in improving the health of infants and women of childbearing age by preventing birth defects, premature birth and infant mortality, and

WHEREAS, the March of Dimes was founded by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1938 to fight polio, and funded the development of two vaccines – still in use today – that virtually eliminated the crippling disease, and

WHEREAS, the March of Dimes in 1958, having achieved its initial mission, shifted its attention from polio to the prevention of birth defects, and through federal and state advocacy led the way in establishing a nationwide network of birth defects monitoring programs and research centers, and

WHEREAS, the March of Dimes was a pioneer in the support of newborn screening, urging Congress to pass and fund the Newborn Screening Saves Lives Act, which in 2008 established national guidelines on the conditions states should include in newborn programs, and through state advocacy ensured that every state screens all newborns for that core set of conditions, and

WHEREAS, the March of Dimes is a long-time advocate for access to health care for women of childbearing age, infants, children, and families, ensuring they have access to private and public health care coverage, and

WHEREAS, the March of Dimes in 2003 launched the Prematurity Campaign to address the crisis of premature birth and help families have full-term, healthy babies, and authored the Premature Research Expansion and Education Act for Mothers (PREEMIE) Act, which Congress enacted in 2006 and reauthorized in 2013 to expand research, education, and services to fight premature births, and

WHEREAS, the March of Dimes has set a national goal of reducing preterm birth to 5.5 percent in every state by 2030, which will result in a healthier start in life for tens of thousands of infants. Ten percent of all babies are born premature in the state of Florida and the March of Dimes has worked extensively to promote health services policies that help to reduce premature birth and promote health equity, and

WHEREAS, the March of Dimes in Florida looks forward to partnering with the Mayor and Commissioners in response to the continued crisis of premature birth, and

WHEREAS, the March of Dimes and its volunteers continue to advocate for national and state health policies and programs that affect women of childbearing age, infants, children, and families, and

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Linda Hudson, Mayor of the City of Fort Pierce, Florida, do hereby proclaim November, 2016 as:

“World Prematurity Awareness Month”

And urge all residents to bring about recognition of this global health crisis.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Official Seal of the City of Fort Pierce, Florida, to be affixed this 17th day October, 2016.

MAYOR/COMMISSIONER