

## PROCLAMATION

- WHEREAS,** Americans are the victims of violent crime with more than 20 million crimes each year, affecting individuals, and communities; and
- WHEREAS,** In 2017, 1,408 residents of Williamson County experienced the trauma, pain, humiliation and personal and financial losses of being a victim of violent crime; and
- WHEREAS,** Providing victims with knowledge of their rights and available services further strengthens their ability to recover by restoring a sense of self-empowerment; and
- WHEREAS,** A trauma-informed response to victims promotes healing and fosters strength in survivors; and
- WHEREAS,** Unaddressed trauma from victimization weakens the resilience of victims and their communities, impeding their ability to rebuild their lives; and
- WHEREAS,** Victims who feel understood and supported are more likely to disclose their victimization, seek services, and participate in the justice process; and
- WHEREAS,** This year's theme—**Expand the Circle: Reach All Victims**—emphasizes the importance of inclusion in victim services. This year's theme addresses how the crime victims field can better ensure that every crime victim has access to services and support; and how professionals, organizations, and communities can work in tandem to reach all victims; and
- WHEREAS,** A multidisciplinary response, involving collaboration among victim service professionals, criminal justice officials, legal professionals, medical and mental health providers, community leaders and citizens within the community is essential to reach and serve all victims—especially those who are marginalized, have disabilities, or live in remote locations; and
- WHEREAS,** We must all do our part to strengthening a multidisciplinary response—bringing diverse skills, perspectives, and understandings together in the service of victims—which also serves to build the resilience of those responders, by strengthening the confidence in their roles, abilities, and sense of contribution; and
- WHEREAS,** National Crime Victims' Rights Week, April 8-14, 2018, provides an opportunity to recommit to ensuring that all victims of crime—especially those who are challenging to reach or serve—are afforded their rights and receive a trauma-informed response; and
- WHEREAS,** Williamson County is hereby dedicated to strengthening victims and survivors in the aftermath of crime, building resilience in our communities and our victim responders, and working for justice for all victims and survivors;

**NOW, THEREFORE,** I, DAN A. GATTIS, as County Judge of Williamson County, Texas, do hereby proclaim the week of April 8-14, 2018, as

### *Crime Victims' Rights Week*

And reaffirm this County's commitment to creating a victim service and criminal justice response that assists all victims of crime during Crime Victims' Rights Week and throughout the year; and to express our sincere gratitude and appreciation for those community members, victim service providers, and criminal justice professionals who are committed to improving our response to all victims of crime so that they may find relevant assistance, support, justice, and peace.

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DAN A. GATTIS, COUNTY JUDGE

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DATE