

COUNTY OF HAWAI'I

Proclamation

WHEREAS April 1st kicks off **Autism Acceptance Month**, when we recognize individuals around the world who live on the autism spectrum, and celebrate the numerous ways autistic individuals enhance the quality of our communities and enrich our world, reaffirming their fundamental right to participate fully in society, be treated with dignity and respect, and fulfill their highest potential; and

WHEREAS in 2021, the CDC reported that 1 in 44 children in the U.S. is diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder. These individuals are our classmates, colleagues, friends and loved ones, and greatly contribute their strengths, talents, and abilities to the community around them; and

WHEREAS, for decades advocates have celebrated Autism Awareness Month. We know that the choice of our words matters, and that unity and acceptance are foundational values to move our society forward. Awareness provides education and understanding; Acceptance is what is needed to inspire inclusion and systems-wide change to achieve full participation within society; and

WHEREAS the County of Hawai'i understands the importance of fostering acceptance, which will lead to improved support and equity in education, employment, accessible integrated housing, affordable transportation and health care and comprehensive long-term services for those on the autism spectrum; and

WHEREAS the County of Hawai'i believes that everyone should have a fair shot at getting ahead, and will continue to prioritize enacting and implementing policies that break down the barriers to access for people with autism and other disabilities living and succeeding in their chosen communities; and

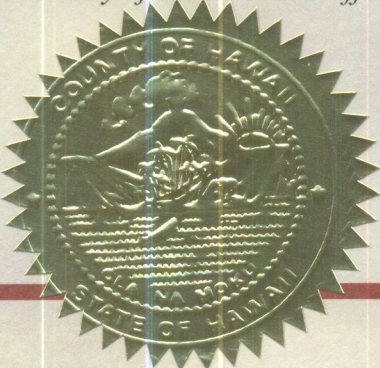
WHEREAS the Hawai'i Chapter of the Autism Society, is proud to celebrate Autism Acceptance Month with its "**Celebrate Differences**" campaign, recognizing that the diversity of our people is what our society is built upon, and that our greatness depends on it.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, MITCHELL D. ROTH, Mayor of the County of Hawai'i, do hereby proclaim April 2022, as

AUTISM ACCEPTANCE MONTH

in the County of Hawai'i and encourage our citizens to learn more about autism and to reach out in acceptance and in support of individuals on the autism spectrum and their families. Together we can foster acceptance, spread awareness, and ignite change for autistic individuals to live fully across all areas of life.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused The Seal of the County of Hawai'i to be affixed. Done this 1st day of April 2022 in Hilo, Hawai'i.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mitchell D. Roth".

MITCHELL D. ROTH
MAYOR