

# COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA



## PROCLAMATION BY THE GOVERNOR

WHEREAS, Pennsylvania is committed to protecting and promoting the health and well-being of all Commonwealth citizens; and

WHEREAS, twenty-one percent of the Commonwealth's population is sixty-five years of age and older, and one-fourth of this age group suffers from falling accidents each year, resulting in serious injury such as broken bones or a head injury; and

WHEREAS, falling and fear of falling can lead to depression, hopelessness, loss of mobility, and loss of functional independence; and

WHEREAS, according to the Pennsylvania Health Care Cost Containment Council and the Bureau of Health Statistics and Research, falls are the leading cause of fatal and nonfatal injuries among people sixty-five years of age and older, accounting for 72.3% of fatal traumatic brain injuries, 2,043 deaths, and 60,827 hospitalizations in 2021; and

WHEREAS, falls prevention is a public health priority, especially with its potential to reduce traumatic injuries amongst the sixty-five years of age and older population; and

WHEREAS, evidence-based programs reduce falls by utilizing cost-effective strategies, such as exercise programs to improve balance and strength, medication management, vision improvement, reduction of home hazards, and fall prevention education; and

WHEREAS, the average hospitalization charge for falls among older adults was \$83,175 in 2021, and the financial toll for older adult falls is expected to increase as the population ages and may reach \$101 billion nationally by 2030; and

WHEREAS, falls prevention strategies can positively impact the quality of life of Pennsylvania's older adults, helping them remain healthy, active, and independent.

THEREFORE, I, Josh Shapiro, Governor of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, do hereby proclaim September 18-22, 2023 to be

### FALLS PREVENTION AWARENESS WEEK

and encourage citizens across the Commonwealth to recognize the importance of falls prevention as a priority to public health.



GIVEN under my hand and the Seal of the Governor, at the City of Harrisburg, this twenty-second day of August two thousand twenty-three, the year of the Commonwealth the two hundred forty-eighth.

Governor Josh Shapiro