



## Proclamation By the Governor of Alabama

*WHEREAS*, oropharyngeal cancers are those confined to the base of the tongue, the soft palate, tonsils and the back of the throat, and the American Cancer Society estimates 58,450 people will get oral cavity or oropharyngeal cancer this year; and

*WHEREAS*, symptoms of oral cancer include persistent hoarseness or sore throat, earaches or enlarged lymph nodes of the neck, difficulty swallowing and unexplained weight loss, while the mouth may have unusual sores, swelling and areas of red or white lesions; and

*WHEREAS*, factors which can increase the risk of oral cancer include tobacco use of any kind; including cigarettes, cigars, pipes, chewing tobacco and snuff; alcohol use, both moderate and heavy; prolonged sun exposure to lips; a weakened immune system; and a risk factor which has risen over the past two decades, oropharyngeal cancer related to the human papilloma virus (HPV); and

*WHEREAS*, an HPV vaccine was developed to prevent cervical and other cancers of the reproductive system, and observational studies by the American Dental Association Council on Scientific Affairs find that HPV vaccination is associated with a greater than 90 percent reduction in oral HPV infection; and

*WHEREAS*, regular oral cancer examinations performed by an oral health professional remain the best method for detecting oral cancer in its early stages, and when detected and treated early, treatment-related health problems are reduced and survival rates may increase;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Kay Ivey, Governor of Alabama, do hereby proclaim April 2024, as

## Oral Cancer 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 14<sup>th</sup> day of March 2024.

*Kay Ivey*  
Kay Ivey, Governor



Seated: Governor Kay Ivey; Standing L-R: Michele Huebner, ALDA, Executive Director; Amanda Martin, ADPH, Bureau Director, Family Health Services; Dr. Tommy Johnson, ADPH, State Dental Director; Dr. Casey Daniel, USA Health Mitchell Cancer Institute, Director of Epidemiology and Public Health; Dr. Scott Harris, ADPH, State Health Officer; Barbara Schuler, VAX 2 STOP CANCER, Founder and CEO; Dr. Karen Landers, ADPH, Chief Medical Officer; Dr. David Bronner, RSA, CEO, Oral Cancer Survivor