



**OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
AMERICAN SAMOA GOVERNMENT**

**PROCLAMATION
“MARCH OF DIMES 85th ANNIVERSARY”**

- WHEREAS,** families face serious health risks and March of Dimes fights for their health by supporting research, leading programs, and providing education and advocacy; and
- WHEREAS,** 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,** 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,** March of Dimes has undertaken decades of groundbreaking research in maternal and infant health, which has led to the discovery of lifesaving products and tests such as surfactant therapy for premature infants and tests to identify life-threatening birth defects; and
- WHEREAS,** March of Dimes has developed a collaborative model to study and prevent preterm birth through groundbreaking research at five Prematurity Research Centers; and
- WHEREAS,** 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 screening programs, and through state advocacy ensured that every state screens all newborns for that core set of conditions; and
- WHEREAS,** 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 quality, affordable health care before, during, and after pregnancy through programs such as the Children’s Health Insurance Program and Medicaid postpartum extension coverage for one full year after childbirth; and
- WHEREAS,** March of Dimes was a leading advocate for bipartisan legislation to ensure reasonable accommodations in the workplace with passage and enactment of the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act; and
- WHEREAS,** 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 Prematurity Research Expansion and Education for Mothers (PREEMIE) Act, which Congress enacted in 2006 to expand research, education, and services to fight premature births; and

WHEREAS, March of Dimes has set a national goal of reducing preterm birth to 8.1% in every state, which will result in a healthier start in life for tens of thousands of infants; and

WHEREAS, March of Dimes sponsors numerous programs to support healthy pregnancies and infants, such as its work to prevent early elective deliveries and maternal mortality, as well as its NICU Family Support program; and

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

WHEREAS, March of Dimes is committed to mobilizing the nation by amplifying the voices of pregnant people and families.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, **LEMANU P. S. MAUGA**, Governor of American Samoa, do hereby proclaim March 2023 as “*March of Dimes Anniversary*” in American Samoa. During this March of Dimes Anniversary, I urge the people of American Samoa to fight against birth defects and particularly emphasize to all mothers the importance of maintaining good health by seeking medical care during the childbearing years.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto affixed my signature and the seal of my office on this 1st day of March, in the year of our Lord two thousand twenty-three.


LEMANU P.S. MAUGA
Governor