



# Proclamation

**WHEREAS**, premature birth and its complications are the largest contributors to infant death in the U.S.; and

**WHEREAS**, babies are not fully developed until after 39 weeks, and babies born too soon can have lifelong health issues and learning challenges; and

**WHEREAS**, women should seek prenatal care in the first trimester to benefit from new strategies to prevent preterm birth; and

**WHEREAS**, the March of Dimes reports that preterm birth rates have been increasing for four years from 9.63 percent in 2015 to 10.02 percent in 2018; and

**WHEREAS**, in Florida, in 2018, the preterm birth rate was 10.3 percent, above the national average; and

**WHEREAS**, the State of Florida, the March of Dimes, and the Greater Gainesville Market of the March of Dimes, which encompasses the City of Ocala, works to raise public awareness of the problems of prematurity and to decrease the rate of preterm birth and infant mortality in Florida; and

**WHEREAS**, the month of November is recognized annually as World Prematurity Awareness Month to bring about recognition of this important topic to increase awareness of the high rates of preterm births and to support healthy pregnancies and prevent birth defects and infant deaths.

**NOW, THEREFORE**, I, Kent Guinn, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Mayor of the City of Ocala, Florida, do hereby proclaim the month of November and November 17th as

## **Prematurity Awareness Month and Prematurity Awareness Day**

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF**, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the City of Ocala, Florida, to be affixed this 12<sup>th</sup> day of November 2019.



Kent Guinn, Mayor  
City of Ocala