

**State of Vermont**  
**Executive Department**  
**A Proclamation**

- WHEREAS,** Vermont is ranked 41<sup>st</sup> out of 50 states in the nation for prevalence of falls by the United Health Foundation's 2017 America's Health Rankings Senior Report; and
- WHEREAS,** 18.1 percent of Vermonters are 65 years of age or older; and
- WHEREAS,** Vermont's fall rate for persons age 65 and older is greater than 31.7 percent and significantly higher than the national rate of 28.7 percent; and
- WHEREAS,** falls are the most common cause of traumatic brain injuries (TBI) and account for 31 percent of TBI-related deaths and 54 percent of TBI hospitalizations and emergency department visits; and
- WHEREAS,** falls are the leading cause of injury-related deaths, hospitalizations, and emergency department visits in Vermont; and
- WHEREAS,** falls and the fear of falling can lead to depression and hopelessness, as well as a loss of mobility and independence; and
- WHEREAS,** the Falls Free Vermont coalition, in partnership with the Vermont Department of Health, Department of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living, Vermont Area Agencies on Aging, University of Vermont Center on Aging, Vermont Emergency Medical Services, and health care system providers, encourages use of free falls risk screenings and falls prevention programs offered in communities around the state; and
- WHEREAS,** older adults can remain independent and reduce their chances of falling by engaging in regular exercise, reviewing their medication with a health care provider, having their eyes checked annually, and making their home safer by installing safety devices; and
- WHEREAS,** older adults, family members, caregivers, health care professionals, and service providers are encouraged to raise awareness and prevent falls by supporting evidence-based interventions, community partnership, and education to substantially reduce the number of falls.

**NOW, THEREFORE,**

I, Philip B. Scott, Governor, do hereby proclaim September 2017 as

**FALLS PREVENTION AND AWARENESS MONTH**

in Vermont, and encourage citizens in our state to join in this special observance.



Given under my hand and the Great Seal of the State of Vermont on this 10th day of August, A.D. 2017.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Philip B. Scott", written over a horizontal line.

Philip B. Scott  
Governor

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brittney L. Wilson", written over a horizontal line.

Brittney L. Wilson  
Secretary of Civil and Military Affairs