

STATE OF ALASKA



Executive Proclamation by *Governor Bill Walker*

WHEREAS, many older Alaskans desire to “age in place” in the safety, security, and comfort of their own home; and

WHEREAS, Alaska continues to have the fastest-growing older adult population in the nation, with ten percent of the population being age 65 and older, and Alaskans age 60 and older comprising the fastest-growing age segment of the state’s population; and

WHEREAS, falls are largely a preventable community health problem, as they are the leading cause of fatal and nonfatal injuries among Alaskans age 65 and older, leading to approximately 36 deaths, 1,600 hospitalizations, and 123 emergency department visits in 2015; and

WHEREAS, one of three older Alaskans fall each year on average, with those who have fallen being two or three times more likely to fall again, and the fear of falling threatens a senior’s safety and independence; and

WHEREAS, in Alaska the average estimated medical cost of a single fall-related hospitalization is \$55,000, which amounted to over \$41 million in public and private health care spending in 2013; and

WHEREAS, senior citizens can reduce their chances of falling by participating in exercise programs to improve balance and strength, reviewing their medications with a healthcare professional, having regular eye exams, as well as reducing home hazards that can cause tripping and installing safety devices; and

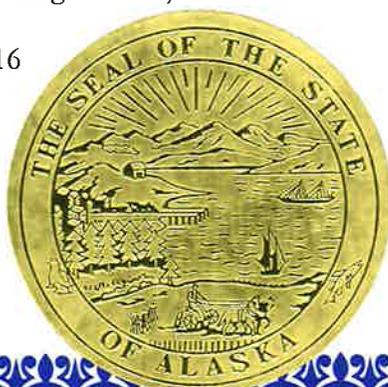
WHEREAS, fall prevention strategies have a positive impact on the quality of life for Alaska’s seniors, and family, friends, neighbors, and community organizations can support older Alaskans by being aware of the elderly around them and providing them with assistance.

NOW THEREFORE, I, Bill Walker, GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF ALASKA, do hereby proclaim September 22, 2016 as:

Senior Falls Prevention Awareness Day

in Alaska, and encourage all Alaskans to practice fall prevention, offer their support to seniors, and to promote awareness of the dangers of injuries for our elders.

Dated: September 13, 2016



Bill Walker
Bill Walker, Governor
who has also authorized the
seal of the State of Alaska to
be affixed to this proclamation.