

# Proclamation



*Bob Buckhorn, Mayor*

**WHEREAS**, all children deserve strong families with mothers and fathers who are there to protect and love them, and every year hundreds of Hillsborough County, Florida families extend the gift of family to a child through adoption, providing a unique opportunity to improve children's lives and enrich the lives of adoptive parents, their families and their communities; and

**WHEREAS**, over 100,000 children in the United States of America are in foster care from the very young to teenagers, sibling groups and those with special needs, and they face an average wait time of nearly three years to find a family, and more than 23,000 age out of the foster care system without finding a permanent loving home, and in Florida, state and local government agencies and nonprofit organizations including the Florida Department of Children and Families, Guardian ad Litem and Eckert Connects work together to raise awareness about foster care and adoptions in our state; and

**WHEREAS**, November is known as **Adoption Recognition Month** nationally to bring attention to the enrichment that adoption brings, and this year, **National Adoption Day** is on Saturday, November 18, 2017, held throughout the United States to further raise awareness through planned celebrations that offer children the opportunity for loving forever families, while encouraging others to consider the joys that come with adoption; and

**WHEREAS**, in Hillsborough County, Florida, the Thirteenth Judicial Court, Eckerd Connects Community Alternatives Hillsborough, Guardian ad Litem, and other community organizations will join together to celebrate November as National Adoption Month in an effort to bring attention to foster care and to those children still awaiting adoption, and the tremendous value of adoption in the Tampa Bay area; and

**WHEREAS**, on Thursday, November 16, 2017, the George E. Edgecomb Courthouse will open its doors to host **Hillsborough National Adoption Day** featuring the theme **Adoption Rocks!**, and it invites the Tampa community to witness the happiness of many adoption finalizations and celebrate the adoptive families; and

**WHEREAS**, these fortunate children will celebrate the finalization of their adoptions, have their first new family portrait made by the Heart Gallery of Tampa, receive a gift bag donated by Voices for Children and a teddy bear from the Rough Riders, and go to their new homes, secure in the love of families they can now call their own; and

**NOW, THEREFORE**, I, Bob Buckhorn, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Mayor of the city of Tampa, Florida, do hereby proclaim Thursday, November 16, 2017 as

## **"HILLSBOROUGH NATIONAL ADOPTION DAY"**

in the city of Tampa, Florida, and urge all citizens to join in honoring the many caring families and individuals who have made a difference in a child's life through adoption.

Dated in Tampa, Florida, this 1<sup>st</sup> day of November, 2017.



*Bob Buckhorn*

Mayor