



BY THE GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF GEORGIA

## A PROCLAMATION

### SHALLOW WATER BLACKOUT PREVENTION DAY

- WHEREAS:** Shallow water blackout is an underwater “faint” due to a lack of oxygen to the brain brought on by holding one’s breath for long periods of time. Without immediate rescue, the swimmer quickly drowns; and
- WHEREAS:** Shallow water blackout results from hypoxia (low oxygen) to the brain. What triggers one to breathe is elevation of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), not low oxygen (O<sub>2</sub>); and
- WHEREAS:** Shallow water blackout frequently occurs without any warning of its onset. Because of the hypoxia and detached mental state one can feel euphoric and empowered to continue breath-holding; and
- WHEREAS:** Shallow water blackout is most common among physically fit swimmers, those who spear fish, and free divers; and
- WHEREAS:** The most dangerous behaviors that place one at risk for shallow water blackout are repetitive, competitive prolonged breath-holding laps with little rest in between, especially if intentional or unintentional hyperventilation has occurred; and
- WHEREAS:** Shallow water blackout can be prevented by following these steps: never hyperventilate, never ignore the urge to breathe, never swim alone, never play breath-holding games, and never perform repetitive, competitive underwater laps – one lap, come up to breathe; and
- WHEREAS:** May is National Water Safety Month and often marks the beginning of the swimming season; now
- THEREFORE:** I, BRIAN P. KEMP, Governor of the State of Georgia, do hereby proclaim May 31, 2019, as SHALLOW WATER BLACKOUT PREVENTION DAY in Georgia.

In witness thereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the Executive Department to be affixed this 6<sup>th</sup> day of May in the year of our Lord, Two Thousand and Nineteen.



*B. P. Kemp*  
GOVERNOR

ATTEST

*Trinity K. Fleming*  
CHIEF OF STAFF