

PROCLAMATION

***WHEREAS**, on March 22, 1972, President Nixon signed into law a measure amending the Older Americans Act of 1965 to include a national public-private nutrition program for individuals 60 years and older; for over 5 decades, this landmark law has supported our nation's seniors to fund community-based organizations - like Meals on Wheels - it is still the only federal program designed specifically to meet the nutritional and social needs of older adults; and*

***WHEREAS**, Meals on Wheels programs, such as the program managed by Senior Services of Alexandria and the City's Division of Aging and Adult Services, provide nutritious meals, both congregate and home-delivered, to seniors that help them maintain their health and independence, thereby helping to prevent unnecessary falls and hospitalizations and provide necessary connections. The Meals on Wheels program in the City of Alexandria, Virginia has served our communities admirably since 2002; and volunteers for the Meals on Wheels program in the City of Alexandria, Virginia are the backbone of the program, delivering nutritious meals to seniors and individuals with disabilities who are at significant risk of hunger and isolation with caring concern and attention to their welfare; and*

***WHEREAS**, the Meals on Wheels program in the City of Alexandria, Virginia provides a powerful opportunity for social connection for hundreds of seniors to help combat the negative health effects and economic consequences of loneliness and isolation; and the Meals on Wheels program in the City of Alexandria, Virginia deserves recognition for the heroic contributions and essential services they provided during the COVID-19 pandemic, inclement weather, and the recent fire emergency at Jeffery's Catering; and*

***WHEREAS**, the senior population is increasing substantially, and action is needed now to support local Meals on Wheels programs through federal, state and local funding; volunteering; donations; and raising awareness to ensure these vital services can continue to be delivered for years to come; and*

***WHEREAS**, 12 million seniors are still threatened by or experience hunger; a third of seniors feel lonely, and one in three Meals on Wheels programs has a waitlist with seniors waiting on average three months for vital meals; Meals on Wheels programs from across the country are joining together for the #SaveLunch campaign this March to celebrate their collective success and to generate the support needed to ensure these critical programs can continue to address food insecurity and malnutrition, combat social isolation and loneliness, enable independence and improve health outcomes.*

***NOW, THEREFORE, I JUSTIN M. WILSON**, Mayor of the City of Alexandria, Virginia, do hereby proclaim March 2024 as:*

"A MONTH CELEBRATING SENIOR NUTRITION PROGRAMS"

in the City of Alexandria and urge every community member to take this month to honor our senior nutrition programs, the individuals they serve and the volunteers who care for them. We hereby recognize, the Older Americans Act Nutrition Program and Meals on Wheels programs for their heroic efforts to help combat senior hunger and isolation in America.

***IN WITNESS WHEREOF**, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the City of Alexandria to be affixed this 12th day of March, 2024.*

MAYOR JUSTIN M. WILSON

*On behalf of the City Council
of Alexandria, Virginia*

ATTEST:

Gloria A. Sitton, CMC City Clerk

