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 (CO2), not low oxygen (O2); 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 repetitious, 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 6th day of May in the year of our Lord, Two Thousand and Nineteen.