STATE OF NEBRASKA

Proclamation

WHEREAS, *The Office of Dispute Resolution (ODR) of the State of Nebraska, created by statute in 1991 as part of the Administrative Office of the Nebraska Supreme Court, is celebrating more than 17 years of mediation in our state; and*

WHEREAS, *Mediation is a constructive and empowering process which offers the opportunity to address the needs of all Nebraska citizens to resolve disputes. This especially includes our youngest citizens - children - who are sadly and unfortunately caught in the middle of parental child abuse and neglect and domestic relations conflicts, and offers an experienced, knowledgeable mediation process to address their needs and interests in a safe, child-centered, and timely way; and*

WHEREAS, *The six ODR-approved non-profit regional community mediation centers identified below provide "best practice" approaches to child welfare mediation, family group conferencing for children and families, as well as access to other collaborative, restorative justice, and dispute resolution services to address family, community, workplace, school conflict:*

- *The Resolution Center, Beatrice;*
- *The Mediation Center, Lincoln;*
- *Nebraska Justice Center, Fremont;*
- *Concord Center, Omaha;*
- *Central Mediation Center, Kearney; and*
- *Center for Conflict Resolution, Scottsbluff; and*

WHEREAS, *The mediation centers, in cooperation with the Office of Dispute Resolution, have handled over 22,000 cases since 1992 involving families and children, businesses, schools, government and policy makers, neighborhoods and organizations; and*

WHEREAS, *Professionally trained and experienced center-affiliated mediators have provided over 60,000 hours of service to more than 80,000 citizens of Nebraska, all of whom received assistance regardless of their ability to pay; and*

WHEREAS, *Mediation and other dispute resolution processes are continuing to grow in use and availability, including services such as: Douglas County District Court's Mediation and Conciliation Office, private and independent mediators, NMCA Mediation Training Institute, Werner Institute for Negotiation and Dispute Resolution, Through the Eyes of the Child initiative to offer pre-hearing facilitated child welfare protective custody conferences in urban and rural courts, and court-referred parenting mediation; and*

WHEREAS, *In these turbulent times of interpersonal and world conflict, the Office of Dispute Resolution, the ODR-member centers, court-based mediation programs and independent mediators all strive to help Nebraskans to resolve their differences by providing these services.*

NOW, THEREFORE, *I, Dave Heineman, Governor of the State of Nebraska, DO HEREBY PROCLAIM the month of March 2009, as*

MEDIATION MONTH

in Nebraska, and I do hereby urge all citizens to join with me in actively supporting mediation as a means to peaceful resolution of disputes.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand, and cause the Great Seal of the State of Nebraska to be affixed this eleventh day of March, in the year of our Lord Two Thousand Nine.

Attest:

Secretary of State

Governor