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**Joint Board Matter with Supervisor Lusk**

**Request to Designate April 2023 as Child Abuse Prevention Month**

Members of the Board,

April is a time to recognize the importance of families and communities working together to prevent child abuse. The pandemic increased stressors on families, thereby increased risk factors for child maltreatment. Nearly 3.1 million children were involved with Child Protective Services across the country in 2020. In 2022, nearly 53,000 children in the Commonwealth of Virginia and nearly 3,600 children in Fairfax County were reported as possible victims of abuse or neglect. Additionally, Fairfax County's Child Protective Services' 24-hour hotline received approximately 13,300 calls in 2022 for protective services and information about prevention and family support services.

Child abuse prevention is a community responsibility and finding solutions depends on involvement among all people. The lives of our children can be positively changed and saved by active and aware community members making a critically important decision to ask more questions and offer help. Adverse childhood experiences result in long-term health impacts. Fortunately, the trauma of child abuse and neglect is preventable.

Every child deserves to grow up in a safe, nurturing, and stable environment. Fairfax County is dedicated to the safety of children and providing the appropriate supports to parents to keep families healthy.

Without objection, we move that the Board designate April 2023 as Child Abuse Prevention Month in Fairfax County and present a proclamation to the Fairfax County Department of Family Services at its meeting on March 21, 2023.