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## Save Your Vision Week, 1983

*By the President of the United States of America*

### A Proclamation

Good vision is a priceless gift. Yet each year many Americans needlessly lose vision as a result of diseases and accidents whose sight-destroying effects could have been prevented.

Regular eye examinations by an eyecare professional can often avert the tragedy of visual loss. While a checkup will usually show that our eyes are healthy, we may also receive early warning of a serious eye disease requiring treatment. Diabetic eye disease, for example, is a leading cause of visual impairment. Through examination it can be detected and treated. If all diabetics were aware of the need for routine eye checkups, many more cases of blindness could be avoided.

The elderly and the young have a special need for periodic eye examinations. A number of blinding diseases strike more often in later years. With early warning of eye disease and proper treatment, older people could be spared visual handicaps which threaten their independence and limit their enjoyment of life. For children, a routine checkup may reveal an eye problem that can hamper the child in school or at play. Some disorders must be treated during childhood or permanent visual loss will result.

Accidents are a common cause of vision loss or impairment. Tragically, many accidents could have been avoided by the use of such simple precautions as wearing safety glasses, goggles, or face shields while involved in hazardous work or sporting activities.

We can help others in our community to prevent or overcome visual impairment by supporting organizations committed to sight conservation. These organizations campaign for eye safety and the use of protective eye wear in sports and on the job. They provide aids and professional low vision services to improve the quality of life for those who are vision impaired, and they encourage us to donate our eyes after death for biomedical research and for sight-restoring corneal transplant surgery.

To encourage Americans to safeguard their eyesight and reduce the national toll of visual disability, the Congress, by joint resolution approved December 30, 1963 (77 Stat. 629, 36 U.S.C. 169a), has requested the President to proclaim the first week in March of each year as Save Your Vision Week.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby designate the week beginning March 6, 1983, as Save Your Vision Week. I urge all citizens to join in this observance by taking steps to preserve vision and prevent eye injury at home, at work, and at play. I call upon eyecare professionals, the media, educators, and all individuals and public and private organizations concerned with sight conservation to unite in activities that will foster concern for eye care and eye safety among Americans of all ages. I also urge their support of programs to improve and protect the vision of all Americans.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 10th day of February, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-three, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and seventh.

*Ronald Reagan*