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American Heart Month, 1984

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Diseases of the heart and blood vessels are among the Nation's most important health problems. This year one and one-half million Americans will suffer a heart attack, and nearly one million people will die from diseases of the heart. The economic drain on our resources in the form of direct medical costs and lost wages and production will exceed \$60 billion.

Since 1948, the United States Public Health Service and a private voluntary organization, the American Heart Association, have joined in a concerted effort to combat cardiovascular diseases. These organizations have channeled their efforts and resources to reduce heart disease through such measures as prevention, diagnosis, and treatment; training of new research workers and clinicians; support for community service programs; and public education.

It is gratifying to note that mortality rates for heart disease and stroke are declining. Deaths from coronary heart disease have declined by more than 25 percent since 1972, while those from stroke have decreased by more than 40 percent. In large part, this favorable trend is the result of more Americans being aware of the personal risk factors for heart disease and adopting healthier life styles by changing their habits in such critical areas as smoking, cholesterol intake, exercise, and in controlling high blood pressure.

At the same time, science and medicine have made great strides in the past few years in technology to diagnose and treat diseases of the heart and blood vessels. The dedicated scientists and clinicians who labor to uncover the hidden causes of heart disease also deserve recognition. Lifesaving technology now in the hands of physicians has brought about more certain diagnoses of these diseases as well as the means to treat heart conditions that in the near past were considered beyond effective treatment.

Recognizing the need for all Americans to help in the continuing battle against cardiovascular disease, the Congress, by joint resolution approved December 30, 1963 (77 Stat. 843; 36 U.S.C. 169b), has requested the President to issue annually a proclamation designating February as American Heart Month.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim the month of February, 1984, as American Heart Month. I invite the Governors of the States, the appropriate officials of all other areas subject to the jurisdiction of the United States and the American people to join with me in reaffirming our commitment to the search for new ways to prevent, detect, and control cardiovascular disease in all of its forms.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 14th day of Dec., 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 eighth.

Ronald Reagan