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Crime Victims Week, 1984

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

As citizens of this free Nation, we support a system of justice which protects the rights of the accused by ensuring them due process of law, a just and fair guarantee inscribed into our Constitution. Yet, through ignorance and insensitivity, our criminal justice system has often failed to provide the victims of crime the compassionate treatment they deserve. These persons too often have had to endure alone the physical and emotional pain that crime inflicts upon its victims. Victims of crime have had their lives threatened and disrupted, and their families have been subjected to unnecessary strains. Victims sometimes fear the loss of their livelihood, health, or life, and, most importantly, their cries for elementary justice too frequently go unheard.

Among the essential reasons governments are instituted among peoples is to establish a system of justice for the protection of their citizens. Justice is a primary goal and responsibility of government. As a country founded with the noble purpose of protecting and defending its people, our society cannot ignore the pleas of crime victims. Guided by recommendations of the President's Task Force on Victims of Crime, my Administration is working to implement much-needed changes throughout our criminal justice system to respond to the concerns of crime victims.

The national movement seeking more compassionate treatment for the victims of crime is led in large part by the victims themselves. I commend these courageous men and women who have overcome their pain and despair and are working to help ease the trauma of other victims. But it is crucial to remember that no segment of our society should refuse to recognize its responsibility to help in this most worthy endeavor. We must all strive to preserve the principles of justice on which our free society depends.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim the week beginning April 15, 1984, as Crime Victims Week. I urge officials at all levels of government to pay special attention to the burdens crime victims face. I ask that all Americans listen and respond to the needs of crime victims, who urgently require and deserve our support.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 13th day of April, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-four, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and eighth.

Ronald Reagan