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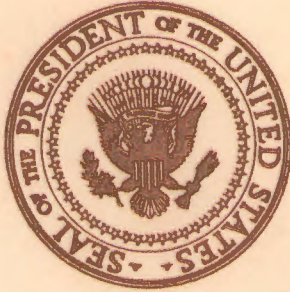
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## Centennial Year of the Gasoline Powered Automobile, 1986

*By the President of the United States of America*

### A Proclamation

In 1885 the world's first successful vehicle powered by a gasoline-fueled internal combustion engine made its appearance in Germany. Shortly thereafter, in January 1886, the United States Patent Office issued its first patent for a motor vehicle powered by such an engine—the forerunner of today's automobile. This year marks the centennial of that patent, an anniversary that well deserves to be recognized.

In the 100 years since that historic patent was issued, the automobile has been the cause or catalyst of an enormous transformation of the American landscape, economy, and society. It has given rise to a vast network of roads and highways that gives access to every region of our land and helps to bind our Nation and its people ever more closely together. The building and improvement of this network has created thousands of jobs, sparked new industries, and provided opportunities for innumerable roadside businesses, large and small.

The invention of the internal combustion engine created the principal market for the oil industry, which was also in its infancy a century ago. One hundred years later, thanks largely to vehicular consumption, the oil industry has become one of the largest and most important in our Nation and in the world. Today, according to industry estimates, more than three-fourths of refined petroleum products are sold to power internal combustion engines, accounting for more than half the revenues of the major producers.

Many of our major industries, such as steel, glass, rubber, and textiles, rely on the auto industry to buy a significant percentage of their output. It is estimated that at least one in five jobs in the United States depends, directly or indirectly, on the automobile industry.

Although challenged in recent decades by strong foreign competition, the American automobile industry has made a dramatic comeback, improving quality and variety as it adjusts to the changing demands of the marketplace.

Except for a brief setback during World War II, the American automobile market has never ceased to expand. Fifty years ago there were only 28.5 million cars on America's roads. Twenty years ago that number was approaching 95 million. Today it is about 175 million—more than one vehicle for every two Americans.

The automobile has given Americans unprecedented mobility—linking farms, towns, cities in a way that was unthinkable before its advent. Indeed, the effects of the automotive age, which began a century ago, have so pervaded every aspect of our lives as to make the automobile a central symbol of twentieth-century civilization in America.

The Congress, by Senate Joint Resolution 231, has designated the period commencing January 1, 1986, and ending December 31, 1986, as the "Centennial Year of the Gasoline Powered Automobile" and authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation in observance of this event.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim the year of 1986 as the Centennial Year of the Gasoline Powered Automobile, and I call upon the people of the United States to observe this year with appropriate programs and activities.

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

*Ronald Reagan*