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National Alzheimer's Disease Month, 1986

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Alzheimer's disease afflicts more than 2.5 million Americans. It destroys specific cells of the brain, impairing memory and judgment and producing confused thought and irritability. Families and friends, no less than the patient, are caught up in a daily battle to cope emotionally, physically, and financially with the patient's loss of intellectual functioning. We owe these patients and their families our understanding and our support.

No cure or treatments yet exist for Alzheimer's disease, but scientific research gives us hope. In medical institutions and laboratories across our country, scientists, supported by the Federal government's National Institute of Neurological and Communicative Disorders and Stroke and by voluntary organizations such as the Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders Association, are carrying out a wide range of studies on Alzheimer's disease and similar forms of dementia.

Each day, these efforts yield new knowledge about the functions of the brain and its disorders. New imaging techniques have disclosed that Alzheimer's disease does not affect the entire brain, as previously thought, but instead destroys specific areas. Scientists can now target future research more precisely on these areas and on certain brain chemicals that appear to play a role in the disease. Much about Alzheimer's disease remains to be learned, but through research we hope to find a way to overcome what we now know is a disease and not "senility" or a normal consequence of aging.

To demonstrate our commitment to conquering this disease and to enhance public awareness of Alzheimer's disease, the Congress, by Public Law 99-520, has designated the month of November 1986 as "National Alzheimer's Disease Month" and authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation in observance of that occasion.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim the month of November 1986 as National Alzheimer's Disease Month, and I call upon the people of the United States to observe this month with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this fifth day of November, 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 eleventh.

Ronald Reagan