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National Hospice Month, 1988

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Hospice care helps terminally ill people cope physically and emotionally with illness and helps their families cope with grief. To achieve these goals, hospices offer an intimate approach for both patient and family that encompasses medical care, relief from pain, and encouragement to continue in loving family relationships. Observance of National Hospice Month, 1988, provides Americans with the chance to learn more about hospice care and its purposes.

Hospices offer compassionate, planned care by interdisciplinary teams of doctors, nurses, therapists, home health aides, homemakers, volunteers, social workers, and pastoral and other counselors. All of these people see to the varied needs of patients and families. At present, small hospices, staffed largely by volunteers, are supplying much of the care to those in need, often without charge. But hospice care is increasingly a part of health care in America. Medicare has begun certifying hospices; Medicaid programs will provide hospice care; and many private insurance companies already offer hospice benefits.

During this special month of observance and in the future, we can all be aware that hospices make it possible for terminally ill people to have a natural death in the comforting knowledge that their loved ones will not face their loss unprepared or alone. We can be grateful for the reverence thus shown for the sanctity of life and human dignity.

The Congress, by Public Law 100-405, has designated November 1988 as "National Hospice Month" and authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation in observance of this month.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim November 1988 as National Hospice Month. I urge all government agencies, the health care community, appropriate private organizations, and the people of the United States to observe the month of November with appropriate programs and activities to recognize and support hospice care.

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

Ronald Reagan