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National Spinal Cord Injury Month

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Head and spinal cord injuries paralyze 10,000 Americans a year and many must use a wheelchair for the rest of their lives. The estimated total cost in dollars to society of these injuries exceeds \$2 billion annually. An additional tragic toll is exacted in diminished personal happiness and productivity. The devastation of spinal cord injury is compounded by the youth of those it strikes: Two-thirds are 20 years of age or younger.

Medicine has advanced to the point that a 15-year-old suffering a severe spinal cord injury has a nearly normal life expectancy, but during the remaining years, these people may experience injury-related health difficulties and incur heavy medical expenses. The enormity of the problem can be seen by the number of people involved—200,000 in the United States alone.

The goals of the Nation's Comprehensive Research Program on Acute Spinal Cord Injury and Paraplegia are to improve outcome and restore lost function. Today's promising experiments suggest that the riddle of regeneration may one day be solved. Devices to restore movement and control bladder function are also being explored. Both Federal and private organizations have joined forces in these common goals.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, in accordance with Senate Joint Resolution 249, do hereby proclaim the month of October 1982, as "National Spinal Cord Injury Month," in recognition of the courage of those who live with spinal cord injury and the efforts of scientists who are seeking answers.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 18th day of October, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-two, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and seventh.

Ronald Reagan