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National Digestive Diseases Awareness Week, 1985

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Digestive diseases rank third in contributing to the total economic burden of illness in the United States. In terms of human discomfort and pain, mortality, and impact on the Nation's economy, they represent one of our most serious health problems. Digestive diseases are the leading cause of hospitalization and surgery in this country, and each day some 200,000 people miss work because of digestive problems. Twenty million Americans are treated for some type of chronic digestive disorder each year, and almost half of the United States population suffers an occasional digestive disorder, creating a yearly expenditure of approximately \$17 billion in direct health care costs and a total economic burden of \$50 billion.

Research into the causes, cures, prevention, and clinical treatment of digestive diseases and related nutrition problems is a national concern. The week of May 12, 1985, marks the second anniversary of the initiation of a national digestive diseases education program. Its goals are to involve the digestive diseases community, including the Coalition of Digestive Disease Organizations, the Federation of Digestive Disease Societies, the National Digestive Diseases Advisory Board, the National Digestive Diseases Education and Information Clearinghouse, and the National Institute of Arthritis, Diabetes, and Digestive and Kidney Diseases, in educating the public and health care practitioners to the seriousness of these diseases and the methods available to prevent, treat, and control them.

In recognition of these important efforts to combat digestive diseases, the Congress, by Senate Joint Resolution 94, has designated the week beginning May 12, 1985, as "National Digestive Diseases Awareness Week" and has authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation calling for observance of this week.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim the week of May 12, 1985, as National Digestive Diseases Awareness Week. I urge the people of the United States and educational, philanthropic, scientific, medical, and health care organizations and professionals to participate in appropriate ceremonies to encourage further research into the causes and cures of all types of digestive disorders so as to alleviate the suffering of their victims.

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

Ronald Reagan