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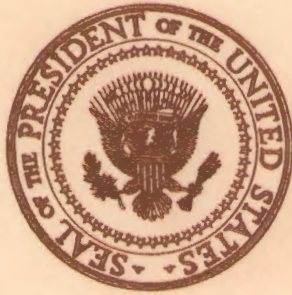
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## Save Your Vision Week, 1986

*By the President of the United States of America*

### **A Proclamation**

Of all the blessings that Americans enjoy, few are more important than good vision. It is this priceless gift that enables us to behold the great beauty of our country and take full advantage of the many opportunities it offers. Yet too many of us take the gift of sight for granted, and each year thousands suffer vision loss that could have been prevented. To avoid such tragedy, all of us must be more aware of what each of us can do to protect our eyes and safeguard our eyesight.

The most important sight-saving precaution is to have regular eye checkups. Such examinations can provide valuable warning of incipient eye diseases that could endanger our vision. Early detection is invaluable, because eye research has produced new treatments that can halt many potentially blinding diseases before they have a chance to impair vision.

For people with diabetes, eye examinations offer an especially good chance to benefit from sight-saving discoveries. Research sponsored by the National Eye Institute has shown that laser treatment can help many people who are at risk of visual loss from diabetic eye disease if the condition is detected early. Anyone with diabetes should be made aware of the importance of regular eye care.

Routine eye examinations are important for people who are middle-aged or older, because that is when many eye diseases have their onset. With regular eye care and prompt attention to conditions that need treatment, most Americans can be free of disabling visual impairment in their later years.

Children also need early and regular eye examinations. Even the healthiest-looking child may have some unsuspected visual problem that needs prompt attention. A routine checkup can detect such disorders in time for effective treatment, sparing the child a needless handicap.

Guarding against eye injuries is important for everyone. In the home as well as in the workplace, people should wear a face mask, goggles, or safety glasses when working with chemicals or machinery that might be dangerous to the eyes. People participating in sports should use appropriate protective eyewear. And children should be taught the basic principles of eye safety.

In addition to saving our own vision, we can give the gift of sight to others after our death. By arranging to become eye donors, Americans can help insure that our Nation's eye banks will be able to continue supplying the precious tissue needed for sight-restoring corneal transplant operations.

We should also support the excellent voluntary organizations that seek to prevent blindness and improve the lives of the visually handicapped. Through their programs of eye research, public education, and special services to people with low vision, these groups make an enormous contribution to the public good.

To encourage our citizens to cherish and protect their sight, the Congress, by joint resolution approved December 30, 1963 (77 Stat. 629, 36 U.S.C. 169a), has authorized and requested the President to proclaim the first week in March of each year as "Save Your Vision Week."

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby designate the week beginning March 2, 1986, as Save Your Vision Week. I urge all Americans to participate in this observance by making eye care and eye safety an important part of their lives. Also, I invite eye care professionals, the communications media, and all public and private organizations committed to the goal of sight conservation to join in activities that will make Americans more aware of the steps they can take to protect their vision.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this thirteenth day of January, 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*