

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FEBRUARY 3, 1975

Office of the White House Press Secretary

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THE WHITE HOUSE

AMERICAN HEART MONTH, 1975

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BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

## A PROCLAMATION

An estimated 28.5 million Americans suffer from some form of heart and blood vessel disease. These diseases cause more than one million deaths each year. Approximately twenty-five percent of these deaths occur among persons under age 65.

Although heart and blood vessel diseases still account for slightly more than half of all deaths each year in the United States, death rates from these disorders declined over the five-year period 1968-1973 (the most recent year for which reliable statistics are available).

This decline did not just happen. It has been achieved through the application of improved methods of prevention, diagnosis, and treatment that has grown out of an intensive and sustained research effort.

Over the years, two agencies have been the prime movers in the Nation's assault on the cardiovascular diseases. One is the National Heart and Lung Institute, an agency of the Federal Government; the other is the American Heart Association, a voluntary health organization that draws its operating funds from private contributions. For more than 25 years, the two organizations have worked hand-in-hand toward common goals: to search for and apply new or improved methods of prevention, diagnosis, and treatment for cardiovascular disorders; to support the training of research and clinical personnel in the cardiovascular field; to provide community service to victims of cardiovascular diseases; and to carry out programs of information and education on cardiovascular topics for health professionals and for the general public.

To encourage continuation of this combined assault on the cardiovascular diseases, the Congress has requested the President to issue annually a proclamation designating February as American Heart Month.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GERALD R. FORD, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim the month of February 1975, as American Heart Month. And I invite the Governors of the States, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and the officials of other areas subject to the jurisdiction of the United States, to heed the nationwide problem of heart and blood vessel diseases. Our support of programs to prevent premature death from cardiovascular diseases is essential to combat this leading menace to the Nation's health.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this third day of February, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred seventy-five, and of the Independence of the United States of America the one hundred ninety-ninth.

GERALD R. FORD

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