

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Office of the White House Press Secretary

THE WHITE HOUSE

OLDER AMERICANS MONTH, 1976

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BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

A PROCLAMATION

Among our Nation's most precious natural resources are the collective wisdom, experience and abilities of our older citizens.

In recent years we have become more aware of the important contributions older Americans have made in the past and in the tremendous potential they hold for the future. We are increasing our efforts to ensure that they have the opportunity for independent living through security of income, maintenance of health and continued useful involvement in the life of our Nation.

America's older citizens have earned the gratitude and respect of our society, as well as our recognition of their worth and dignity. In this spirit, the Federal Council on Aging has prepared the Bicentennial Charter for Older Americans expressing their rights and obligations.

The job market and the area of volunteer services provide some of the best opportunities to draw on the strengths and talents of older Americans. Unfortunately, older, and even middle-aged workers, are too often the victims of myth and prejudice regarding their capabilities. Our society needs the know-how, experience, judgment and eagerness to serve that these citizens bring to the job.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GERALD R. FORD, President of the United States of America, do hereby designate the month of May, 1976, as Older Americans Month.

I urge all State and Area Agencies on Aging and other private and public organizations that are related to the field of aging to observe this month by arranging public forums where the Bicentennial Charter for Older Americans will be discussed and recommendations developed for implementation.

I urge all organizations concerned with employment to observe this month with ceremonies and programs designed to increase employment opportunities for older workers.

I urge all organizations engaged in the delivery of services to persons in need to observe this month by increased emphasis on efforts to recruit, train and place older volunteers.

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And I urge all Americans to observe this month by focusing on the achievements of older persons and supporting programs to make the last days of life the best days for increasing numbers of our older Americans.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this fifth day of April in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred seventy-six, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundredth.

GERALD R. FORD

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