

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Office of the White House Press Secretary

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THE WHITE HOUSE

AMERICAN HEART MONTH, 1976

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BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

A PROCLAMATION

Diseases of the heart and blood vessels remain our Nation's most urgent health problem. These disorders afflict an estimated 28.5 million Americans and cause more than a million deaths each year, about a quarter of which occur among persons under age 65.

In the forefront of the continuing struggle against heart and blood vessel diseases are the National Heart and Lung Institute, a federal agency, and the American Heart Association, a privately-supported voluntary health organization. Their efforts and contributions in the areas of research, training of professionals, including the development of continuing education programs, and community service activities demonstrate what can be achieved when the private and public sectors unite for a common purpose.

We have learned much about the factors that increase susceptibility to arteriosclerosis and its complications, and how to modify or eliminate some of them. We have learned much about the effectiveness of intensive coronary care units and the use of drugs in controlling high blood pressure. We have improved and developed appropriate surgical procedures and life-support techniques. We have learned more about the cardiovascular system and its diseases in the past 25 years than during all previous years of medical history. During this same quarter-century, the overall mortality rate from these diseases has declined by about 25 percent.

In recognition of the seriousness of this menace to the Nation's health and well-being, and to encourage the consolidation and extension of our advances against cardiovascular disease, 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, 1976, as American Heart Month. I invite the Governors of the States, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the officials

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of other areas subject to the jurisdiction of the United States, and the American people, to join with me in reaffirming our commitment to the resolution of the nationwide problem of cardiovascular disease.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-second day of January, 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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