

Their willingness to give freely and unselfishly of themselves, even their lives, in defense of our democratic principles has given our great country the security we enjoy today. From Valley Forge to Vietnam, through war and peace, valiant, patriotic Americans have answered the call, serving with honor and fidelity.

On this special day, our hearts and thoughts turn to all the Nation's veterans. Let us reflect on the great achievements of those whose sacrifices preserved our freedom and our way of life. With a spirit of pride and gratitude, let us recall their heroic accomplishments and thank them for their unselfish devotion to duty. They are indeed worthy of the solemn tribute of a grateful Nation.

I invite all Americans to join me in observing Veterans Day—through appropriate ceremonies, activities, and commemorations on November 11.

In order that we may pay fitting homage to those men and women who have proudly served in our Armed Forces, the Congress has provided (5 U.S.C. 6103 (a)) that November 11 of each year shall be set aside as a legal public holiday to honor America's veterans.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim Tuesday, November 11, 1986, as Veterans Day. I urge all Americans to recognize the valor and sacrifice of our veterans through appropriate public ceremonies and private prayers. I also call upon Federal, State, and local government officials to display the flag of the United States and to encourage and participate in patriotic activities throughout the country. I invite the business community, churches, schools, unions, civic and fraternal organizations, and the media to support this national observance with suitable commemorative expressions and programs.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-third day of September, 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 eleventh.

RONALD REAGAN

Proclamation 5535 of September 30, 1986

Fire Prevention Week, 1986

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

The American people must redouble their efforts to prevent fires and their terrible toll in human lives and the destruction of property. There are encouraging signs: Today smoke detectors have been installed in 75 percent of American homes. Our target is 100 percent. National public awareness campaigns have prompted many families to plan and practice means of quick escape if fire strikes in the home. Fire safety concepts, such as "Stop, Drop, and Roll" to smother a clothing fire, are gaining currency. Many homes have installed sprinkler systems to extinguish fires quickly, and more Americans are making it a practice to keep fire extinguishers handy in the home, especially in the kitchen, where many fires start. There is an increased awareness and avoidance of such dangerous practices as smoking in bed, leaving matches where young children can get at them, and overloading electrical circuits.

Despite all these efforts, the annual deaths, injuries, and economic losses from fire are still staggering. We cannot afford any letup in our efforts to prevent fires.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency and its United States Fire Administration are working with all levels of government, the private sector, service organizations, and volunteer groups to launch a national campaign to assure that every home in the United States has a properly installed and maintained smoke detector. The Operation Life Safety program, a consortium of the private sector, the International Association of Fire Chiefs, and the United States Fire Administration, also is making valuable contributions by encouraging the installation of residential sprinkler systems. Over 150 communities have established such programs at last count.

We are very proud of, and grateful to, our Nation's fire fighters: the more than one million men and women, both volunteer and career, who daily risk their own lives to save the lives and property of others. Last year 122 fire fighters gave their lives in the line of duty. They are true heroes to whom we owe a lasting debt of gratitude. I am pleased to know they will be honored at the National Fallen Fire Fighters Memorial Service at the National Emergency Training Center in Emmitsburg, Maryland, on October 12. I commend the many national, State, and local organizations whose dedicated commitment to fire safety has done so much to reduce our Nation's fire losses in the last decade, and I am grateful for the contributions of the National Fire Protection Association, the originator of Fire Prevention Week, and I congratulate this organization as it celebrates its 90th anniversary this year.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim the week beginning October 5, 1986, as Fire Prevention Week, and I call upon the people of the United States to plan and actively participate in fire prevention activities during this week and throughout the year.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this thirtieth day of September, 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 eleventh.

RONALD REAGAN

Proclamation 5536 of October 4, 1986

National Outreach to the Rural Disabled Day, 1986

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Of the approximately 35 million disabled persons living in the United States, some eight and one-half million are residents of rural areas.

The proportion of disabled persons in rural areas is much higher but less concentrated than in urban areas. This means that disabled persons residing in rural areas are often isolated and far from the types of services, programs, and assistance that are available to their urban counterparts.

To focus attention on the unique problems faced by rural disabled persons and their families, the Congress, by Senate Joint Resolution 406, has designated October 4, 1986, as "National Outreach to the Rural Disabled Day"