

As I assume the office of President, I am humbled before God and seek His counsel and favor on our land, and join with our first President who said, ". . . it would be peculiarly improper to omit in this first official act, my fervent supplications to that Almighty Being who rules over the universe. . . that his benediction may consecrate to the liberties and happiness of the people of the United States, a government instituted by themselves for these essential purposes."

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE BUSH, President of the United States of America, by the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim January 22, 1989, a National Day of Prayer and Thanksgiving and call upon the citizens of our great Nation to gather together on this day in homes and places of worship to pray in thanksgiving for our blessings of peace, freedom, prosperity, and Independence. Let all Americans kneel humbly before our Heavenly Father in search of His counsel and for His divine guidance and wisdom upon the leaders of the United States of America.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twentieth day of January, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-nine, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirteenth.

GEORGE BUSH

Proclamation 5937 of February 21, 1989

American Heart Month, 1989

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Twenty-five years ago, the Government of the United States of America proclaimed its cooperative support of the fight against the Nation's leading killer—heart disease. This year, as in each year since, that support continues.

Diseases of the heart and blood vessels will claim the lives of nearly one million Americans this year. About one-half of all deaths each year are attributed to cardiovascular diseases—almost as many deaths as cancer, accidents, respiratory diseases, AIDS, and all other causes of death combined.

Nearly 66 million of our citizens, more than one-fourth of our population, suffer from some form of cardiovascular disease. High blood pressure alone threatens the lives of more than 60 million Americans age 6 and older. Heart disease strikes regardless of age, race, or sex. Its toll in human suffering is incalculable.

The American Heart Association, a not-for-profit volunteer health agency, estimates the economic cost of cardiovascular diseases in 1989 will be more than \$88 billion in lost productivity and medical expenses. Each year, cardiovascular diseases account for more than 2 million years of potential life lost, based on a life span of 65 years.

But we are making progress. The American Heart Association and the Federal Government, through the National Heart, Lung and Blood Insti-

tute, have been working together since 1948 to find better ways to prevent cardiovascular diseases and stroke and inform the public and educate the medical community about the most effective techniques to treat these diseases. Most recently, the National Cholesterol Education Program was instituted to educate consumers about the dangers of high cholesterol levels. At the center of the National Cholesterol Education Program is its coordinating committee of over 20 member organizations representing major medical associations, voluntary health organizations, community programs, and Federal agencies involved in health and cholesterol education.

Medical advances such as new surgical techniques to repair heart defects, improved pharmacological therapies, emergency systems to prevent death, and knowledge to prevent heart disease from occurring have significantly reduced premature death and disability due to cardiovascular diseases and stroke. From 1976 to 1986, the age-adjusted death rate for cardiovascular diseases dropped 24 percent. But there is still more to be done. One American dies of some form of cardiovascular disease every 32 seconds.

Cardiologists and other health professionals are seeking to reduce the risk of heart disease, stroke, and atherosclerosis. By encouraging Americans of all ages to control high blood pressure, stop smoking, reduce their intake of cholesterol, saturated fats, and sodium in their diets, and exercise regularly, many deaths can be prevented.

The Federal Government supports a wide array of cardiovascular research projects and encourages all Americans to reduce the risks of heart disease by maintaining good health habits.

The American Heart Association and its more than 2.4 million volunteers have contributed to this effort through their support of research and the shared commitment to educate Americans about the need to adopt a sound regimen of proper diet and exercise.

Recognizing that Americans everywhere have a role to play in this continuing battle against a major killer, the Congress, by Joint Resolution approved December 30, 1963 (77 Stat. 843; 38 U.S.C. 169b), has requested the President to issue annually a proclamation designating February as "American Heart Month."

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE BUSH, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim the month of February 1989 as "American Heart Month." I invite the Governors of the States, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, officials of other areas subject to the jurisdiction of the United States, and the American people to join me in reaffirming our commitment to combating cardiovascular diseases and stroke.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-first day of February, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-nine, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirteenth.

GEORGE BUSH