

continue to work to remove barriers that still confront Americans with disabilities and their families.

**Proclamation 7978—American Heart Month, 2006**

February 1, 2006

*By the President of the United States of America*

**A Proclamation**

More than 70 million Americans live with some form of heart disease, and this disease remains the leading cause of death in the United States. During American Heart Month, we reinforce our commitment to fighting heart disease by promoting awareness about its risks, its causes, and the ways to reduce the chance of developing this deadly illness.

Many of the factors that lead to heart disease, such as high blood pressure, high blood cholesterol, and obesity, can be controlled with commonsense steps and healthy lifestyles. Through the HealthierUS Initiative, my Administration encourages Americans to work toward four simple goals that can lead to a healthy heart: exercise daily; develop good eating habits; avoid tobacco, drugs, and excessive alcohol; and take advantage of preventive screenings to detect problems early.

First Lady Laura Bush helps lead “The Heart Truth” campaign through her Women’s Health and Wellness Initiative. The campaign was launched by business, non-profit, and government organizations, including the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, to educate women about the risks of heart disease and to encourage them to make their cardiovascular health a priority. Along with the American Heart Association’s “Go Red for Women” campaign, these initiatives use the red dress as a symbol to remind women to make healthy choices and talk with their doctors about heart disease.

As a result of the Medicare Modernization Act, our seniors have more choices to prevent, diagnose, and treat potential problems before they become worse. Medicare now covers preventive screenings, a “Welcome to Medicare” physical for new beneficiaries,

and innovative programs to help seniors fight chronic threats. I urge all Medicare beneficiaries to take advantage of these measures as part of a healthy lifestyle.

All Americans can improve their heart health and live longer, better lives by taking an active role in their health care decisions and consulting their physician for the latest information. As we observe American Heart Month, we recognize those battling heart disease; we express gratitude to the family members and friends who are a source of love and encouragement; and we commend the medical professionals and researchers who provide assistance and work to find cures and improve treatments.

In acknowledgement of the importance of the ongoing fight against cardiovascular disease, the Congress, by Joint Resolution approved December 30, 1963, as amended (77 Stat. 843; 36 U.S.C. 101), has requested that the President issue an annual proclamation designating February as “American Heart Month.”

**Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush,** President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim February 2006 as American Heart Month, and I invite all Americans to participate in National Wear Red Day on February 3, 2006. I also 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 recognizing and reaffirming our commitment to combating heart disease.

**In Witness Whereof,** I have hereunto set my hand this first day of February, in the year of our Lord two thousand six, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirtieth.

**George W. Bush**

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NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on February 6.

## Remarks at the National Prayer Breakfast

February 2, 2006

**The President.** Thank you all. Please be seated. Thanks for the warm welcome. Laura and I are delighted to be here. This lovely personality said this morning, “Keep your remarks short.” [Laughter]

I appreciate this prayer breakfast a lot, and I appreciate the spirit in which it was formed. Ike said he was living in the loneliest house in America—for what he got to say is, the rent is pretty good. [Laughter]

It’s great to be here with distinguished guests from all around the world. Your Majesty and Prime Ministers and former Prime Ministers, friends with whom I have the honor to work, you’re welcome here. I appreciate the fact that people from different walks of life, different faiths have joined us. Yet I believe we share one thing in common: We’re united in our dedication to peace and tolerance and humility before the Almighty.

I want to thank Senators Pryor and Coleman for putting on this breakfast. I appreciate Senator Frist, Representative Blunt, Representative Pelosi, other Members of the United States Congress who’ve joined us on the dais and who are here for this breakfast. I thank the members of my Cabinet who are here. Get back to work. [Laughter]

I find it interesting that the music is from Arkansas. [Laughter] I’m glad it is, because they know how to sing down there. [Laughter]

You know, I was trying to figure out what to say about Bono—[laughter].

**Bono.** Careful. [Laughter]

**The President.** And a story jumped to mind about these really good Texas preachers. And he got going in a sermon, and a fellow jumped up in the back and said, “Use me, Lord, use me.” And the preacher ignored him and finished his sermon. Next Sunday, he gets up and cranking on another sermon, and the guy jumps up and says, “Use me, Lord, use me.” And after the service, he walked up to him and said, “If you’re serious, I’d like for you to paint the pews.” Next Sunday, he’s preaching; the guy stands up and says, “Use me, Lord, use me, but only in an advisory capacity.” [Laughter]

So I’ve gotten to know Bono. [Laughter] He’s a doer. The thing about this good citizen of the world is, he’s used his position to get things done. You’re an amazing guy, Bono. God bless you.

It is fitting we have a National Prayer Breakfast, because our Nation is a nation of prayer. In America, we do not prescribe any prayer; we welcome all prayer. We’re a nation founded by men and women who came to these shores seeking to worship the Almighty freely. From these prayerful beginnings, God has greatly blessed the American people, and through our prayers, we give thanks to the true source of our blessings.

Americans remain a prayerful people today. I know this firsthand. I can’t tell you the number of times out there traveling our country, people walk up, total strangers, and say, “Mr. President, I’m praying for you and your family.” It is one of the great blessings of the Presidency and one of the most wonderful gifts a person can give any of us who have the responsibility to govern justly. So I thank my fellow citizens for their gracious prayers and wonderful gifts.

Every day, millions of Americans pray for the safety of our troops, for the protection of innocent life, and for the peace we all hope for. Americans continue to pray for the recovery of the wounded and to pray for the Almighty’s comfort on those who have lost a loved one. We give thanks daily for the brave and decent men and women who wear our Nation’s uniform, and we thank their families as well.

In this country, we recognize prayer is a gift from God to every human being. It is a gift that allows us to come before our Maker with heartfelt requests and our deepest hopes. Prayer reminds us of our place in God’s creation. It reminds us that when we bow our heads or fall to our knees, we are all equal and precious in the eyes of the Almighty.

In prayer, we’re reminded we’re never alone in our personal trials or individual suffering. In prayer, we offer our thanksgiving and praise, recognizing our lives, our talents, and all that we own ultimately flow from the Creator. And in these moments of our deepest gratitude, the Almighty reminds us that