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Naval Aviation Day, 1986

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

May 8 marks the seventy-fifth anniversary of naval aviation in the United States. On that day in 1911, Captain Washington Irving Chambers prepared the requisition for the first aircraft for the United States Navy, thereby initiating a long and glorious tradition. Since that date, naval aviation has played an essential role in our national defense, both in peace and war. Naval aviation also has played a vital role in the development of space exploration and aviation technology.

Naval aviators performed superbly in World Wars I and II, the Korean and Vietnam conflicts, and other operations in support of our national security. Today, naval aviators are deployed in all parts of the world aboard our aircraft carriers, other ships, and shore-based naval aviation squadrons. The courage and professionalism of these dedicated men and women were again demonstrated vividly during the anti-terrorist strikes conducted in Libya a few weeks ago. All Americans owe a great debt of gratitude to the people who fly and maintain naval aircraft.

It is appropriate, therefore, that on the day marking the seventy-fifth anniversary of the founding of naval aviation, the people of the United States, along with our friends and allies throughout the world, should celebrate the remarkable achievements and proud heritage of naval aviation.

The Congress, by House Joint Resolution 569, has designated May 8, 1986, as "Naval Aviation Day" and authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation in observance of this occasion.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim May 8, 1986, as Naval Aviation Day, and I call upon the people of the United States to observe this day with appropriate ceremonies and activities to honor the brave men and women who have served their country in naval aviation.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this eighth day of May, 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 tenth.

Ronald Reagan