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National Employ the Handicapped Week, 1983

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Our Nation's history is rooted in the struggle to attain independence: the right of free choice by free citizens in a society that honors the efforts of individuals. The movement of disabled people to full participation in our society, with all its benefits and responsibilities, is an ideal whose time has surely come.

All across this Nation, disabled people are striving to obtain more control over their lives through choices that minimize their reliance and dependence on others. They are taking charge of their own lives and becoming responsible for their own affairs. They are participating in the day-to-day life of the community and fulfilling the whole range of social roles possible in our society.

Since World War II, the United States has set aside one week each year to emphasize ways in which more people with disabilities can be assisted in their efforts to become independent through gainful employment. Despite past and present efforts of employers to hire people with disabilities, the unemployment level of disabled people continues to be unnecessarily high. To solve this problem, we must plan and develop strategies to demonstrate that disabled people are a valuable resource to our economy and our society.

The Congress, by joint resolution of August 11, 1945, as amended (36 U.S.C. 155), has called for the designation of the first full week in October of each year as National Employ the Handicapped Week. During this week, let us renew our commitments to expand the opportunities for disabled citizens and help them to attain their personal goals.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim the week beginning October 2, 1983, as National Employ the Handicapped Week.

I urge all governors, mayors, other public officials, leaders in business and labor, private citizens, and especially the disabled citizens of this great Nation to help meet the challenge of the day. Let us all work together to fulfill the dreams of our disabled citizens: full participation in our expanding economy.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 27th. day of Sept., in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-three, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and eighth.

Ronald Reagan