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National Consumers Week, 1986

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Because ours is a free society, we Americans are blessed with many choices. We can choose to live where we want. We can choose our education and our vocation. We are free to speak our minds, to worship God as our conscience prompts us, and to choose our political affiliation. And nowhere else in the world is there a wider variety of goods and services from which to choose, thanks to an open marketplace and the freedom to produce and purchase. This bountiful marketplace has provided us with a standard of living that is the marvel and envy of the world.

The outlook for the future is even brighter. The regulatory reform of recent years is spawning innovation and reinvigorated competition; by opening new markets, it has resulted in even more choices for consumers. This gives buyers both a new opportunity and a new responsibility to make informed decisions about the quality and value of products and services offered for sale.

To make responsible decisions in our dynamic and abundant economy, consumers need both information and education if they are to reap the full benefits of the marketplace. They need information, the facts about the goods and services; they need to be educated so they can analyze those facts before making a purchase. This will enable them to make wise choices whether they are shopping for food, shelter, clothing, transportation, recreation, health care, entertainment, and so on. Prudent, informed, discriminating consumers put pressure on suppliers to keep improving products and services while devising production efficiencies that will permit them to keep their prices competitive.

In light of the central role of the consumer in our free economy, it is especially appropriate to recognize that relationship during National Consumers Week, 1986. The slogan for 1986, "Consumers Rate Quality," acknowledges that consumers, by seeking quality and value, set the standards of acceptability for products and services by "voting" with their marketplace dollars, rewarding efficient producers of better quality products and performance. It is also a ringing declaration that consumers are entitled to and can insist on honest value for their hard-earned income.

Indeed, American businessmen and women are becoming aware that the broadened competition of a global marketplace necessitates attention to quality if they are to succeed. They must do more than just build better products—they must strive to improve marketing, sales, warranties, and service. Quality demands efficient management, productive use of human resources, and responsiveness to consumer needs and preferences.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim the week beginning April 20, 1986, as National Consumers Week. I urge businesses, educators, community organizations, labor unions, the media, government leaders, and consumers to recognize the pursuit of quality and excellence in every aspect of our lives, and to contribute to consumer and economic awareness during this week.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this fifth day of December, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-five, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and tenth.

Ronald Reagan