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National Child Support Enforcement Month, 1987

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Over 15 million children in the United States live in households with only one parent present. Only about one-third receive child support payments, and many do not receive the full amount that is owed them. American children are being deprived of billions of dollars in support each year, leading to a reduced standard of living and, with tragic frequency, debilitating poverty.

Although the Congress and the Executive branch have designed programs to help nurture children and protect them from poverty, the ultimate responsibility for the care of children belongs with their parents. Ensuring that parents provide for their children is an important goal for our Nation. As I have said, the family is the most basic support system there is, and the most fundamental duty of a parent is to provide financial support to his or her children.

In 1984, the Congress strengthened the Federal-State child support system and improved incentives for State governments to implement effective practices to alleviate the financial distress of children. Dedicated cooperation among family support enforcement personnel, the judiciary, and the legal community has led to greater success in locating absent parents, establishing paternity, and, ultimately, collecting child support. Nonetheless, much remains to be done to foster a nationwide conviction that child support represents not only a legal responsibility but a profound ethical obligation of parents and an urgent moral right of children.

The Congress, by House Joint Resolution 313, has designated the month of August 1987 as "National Child Support Enforcement Month" and has authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation in its observance.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim the month of August 1987 as National Child Support Enforcement Month, and I call upon all government agencies and the people of the United States to observe this month with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities.

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

Ronald Reagan