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## Save Your Vision Week, 1988

*By the President of the United States of America*

### **A Proclamation**

To have healthier eyes, one needs the healthy attitude of caring for those eyes—and of recognizing how much they contribute to life, learning, independence, work, recreation, and the enjoyment of visual beauty. Thanks to recent advances in the treatment and prevention of eye diseases, the possibility of keeping good vision for life is now excellent.

Regular eye checkups are a must. With improved diagnostic techniques and new treatments, we can now stop many potentially blinding diseases even before they begin to affect vision. But many treatments can save vision only if problems are detected early, often before a person notices any symptoms.

Ensuring a lifetime of healthy eyes begins at infancy. Even an infant with healthy-looking eyes may have an unsuspected vision problem that only an eye specialist can detect. We now know that parts of the brain involved in vision cannot develop without early stimulation. If children are to see normally, congenital cataracts, lazy eye, or misaligned eyes must be treated early.

Other eye diseases usually begin in middle age. For example, if glaucoma is detected before any vision is lost, an eye doctor can prescribe one of the new drugs that can check the disease's impact.

The many eye diseases associated with aging need not be disabling. For instance, in cataracts, the cloudy lens can be surgically removed and an artificial lens implanted. In another age-related disease, leaky blood vessels develop in the back of the eye, often doing irreparable damage in only weeks or months. Laser treatment can usually stop the destruction and save the remaining vision.

Laser treatment can also save the sight of some people who risk visual loss due to diabetes. The earlier the intervention, the less the potential vision loss.

To encourage our citizens to cherish and protect their sight, the Congress, by joint resolution approved December 30, 1963 (77 Stat. 629, 36 U.S.C. 169a), has authorized and requested the President to proclaim the first week in March of each year as "Save Your Vision Week."

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby designate the week beginning March 6, 1988, as Save Your Vision Week. I urge all Americans to participate in this observance by making eye care and eye safety an important part of their lives. I also invite eye care professionals, the communications media, and all public and private organizations committed to the goal of sight conservation to join in activities that will make Americans more aware of the steps they can take to protect their vision.

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

*Ronald Reagan*