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**Presidential Documents**

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Title 3—

Proclamation 6926 of October 3, 1996

The President

National Breast Cancer Awareness Month, 1996

By the President of the United States of America

## A Proclamation

Each year we set aside the month of October as a time to assess the toll that breast cancer takes on our society and the progress we have made in our battle to overcome it. For those of us who have lost loved ones to this disease—mothers, wives, daughters, sisters, and friends—the battle holds special urgency.

Breast cancer remains the second leading cause of all deaths among women ages 40 to 55. In 1996, a woman will die from breast cancer every 12 minutes, and 184,300 women in the United States will be diagnosed with the disease. Every one of these diagnoses changes not only that woman's life, but the lives of all who love and care for her.

We have embarked on an all-out assault to combat this threat. The Federal Government has nearly doubled funding for breast cancer research, detection, and treatment since 1993, from \$271 million to \$476 million in the Department of Health and Human Services alone. And in response to requests from 2.6 million of our Nation's citizens, we launched the National Action Plan on Breast Cancer, an innovative public-private partnership to develop a national strategy for prevention, education and care.

We can be proud of the progress we are making in the fight against breast cancer. During the most recent 5-year period for which data are available (1989-1993), age-adjusted mortality rates for white women fell almost 6 percent. Although mortality rates among African American women are still increasing, the rate of increase has slowed to 1 percent, compared to 16 percent during the 1980's.

One of our most successful weapons in the fight against breast cancer is early detection. The new Mammography Quality Standards Act now ensures that every woman who obtains a mammogram to detect breast cancer in its earliest, curable, stages can be certain that facilities meet the highest quality standards for equipment and personnel. We are implementing the National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program to make free or low-cost mammography available to medically under-served women. The First Lady launched an education campaign to inform and encourage older women to use Medicare's mammography screening benefit. And to improve early detection, we are transferring imaging technologies from the space, defense, and intelligence communities.

I urge women throughout our nation to have appropriate mammograms, to perform routine self-examination, and to take advantage of the latest in preventive medical care. Armed with this commonsense approach and the promising advances in research and treatment, we can look forward with confidence to the day when breast cancer is finally eradicated.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim October 1996 as National Breast Cancer Awareness Month. I call upon government officials, businesses, communities, volunteers, educators, and all the people of the United States to celebrate the successes we have had in advancing our knowledge of

breast cancer, and to reaffirm our commitment to continue to work together to fight this disease.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this third day of October, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-six, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-first.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "William J. Clinton". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "W" and "C".

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