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# Presidential Documents

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Title 3—

Proclamation 7280 of March 6, 2000

The President

Save Your Vision Week, 2000

By the President of the United States of America

## A Proclamation

Sight is a precious gift that enables us to experience the wonder of the world around us; but few of us think about what we would do if we lost our vision. Unfortunately, millions of Americans must face this challenge because of conditions like cataracts, glaucoma, diabetic eye disease, or age-related macular degeneration.

Our most powerful tool in the battle against vision loss is early detection. A dilated eye examination can reveal signs of many eye diseases and disorders long before a patient experiences pain or any other noticeable symptom. Through early intervention and treatment, the vision loss accompanying such diseases can be reduced, postponed, or even prevented. Protective eyewear can also play a vital role in saving vision, particularly for individuals who use chemicals or operate machinery.

There is hope as well for people who suffer from low vision. Affecting 1 in 20 Americans, low vision is an impairment that cannot be corrected by standard glasses, contact lenses, medicine, or surgery, and interferes with one's ability to participate in everyday activities. While it can occur in people of all ages and backgrounds, low vision primarily affects the growing population of people over 65 years old; other higher risk populations, including Hispanic and African Americans, are more likely to develop low vision at an earlier age.

While vision loss usually cannot be restored, vision rehabilitation techniques and products can make daily life much easier for people with low vision. From improved lighting in stairways and closets to talking clocks and computers to large-print labels on appliances, there are numerous products and services that can help people with low vision maintain their confidence and independence, and improve their overall quality of life.

Every day, physicians and researchers make progress in the search for better treatments—and ultimately a cure—for vision loss. In this new century, emerging technologies will improve upon existing visual devices and techniques, and new medications will ensure more effective treatment of eye diseases and disorders. By investing in research and technology and committing to regular comprehensive eye examinations, we can ensure a brighter, healthier future for ourselves and our children.

To remind Americans of the importance of safeguarding their eyesight, the Congress, by joint resolution approved December 30, 1963 (77 Stat. 629; 36 U.S.C. 138), has authorized and requested the President to proclaim the first week in March of each year as "Save Your Vision Week."

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim March 5 through March 11, 2000, as Save Your Vision Week. I urge all Americans to participate by making eye care and eye safety an important part of their lives and to ensure that dilated eye examinations are included in their regular health maintenance programs. I invite eye care professionals, the media, and all public and private organizations dedicated to preserving eyesight to join in activities that will raise awareness of the measures we can take to protect and sustain our vision.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this sixth day of March, in the year of our Lord two thousand, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-fourth.



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