

Trump: Empower Those With Down Syndrome to 'Pursue the American Dream'

National Down Syndrome Awareness Month is being celebrated in October, and says Donald Trump has become the first U.S. president to recognize it in 24 years.

Trump became the first U.S. president since Bill Clinton in 1993 to make an official statement about National Down Syndrome Month. Ronald Reagan was the first president to officially designate October as National Down Syndrome Awareness Month, signing a resolution in 1984.

In a statement from the White House website, Trump called out individuals and governments worldwide who downplay the role in society of those affected by Down syndrome.

"Sadly, there remain too many people—both in the United States and throughout the world—that still see Down syndrome as an excuse to ignore or discard human life," Trump said in his statement. "This sentiment is and will always be tragically misguided. We must always be vigilant in defending and promoting the unique and special gifts of all citizens in need. We should not tolerate any discrimination against them, as all people have inherent dignity.

"The approximately 250,000 Americans with Down syndrome truly embody the great spirit of our nation. They inspire joy, kindness and wonder in our families, our workplaces and our communities. We will always endeavor to make sure that their precious gifts are never maligned or taken for granted."

Trump says people affected by Down syndrome should be treated with dignity and respect, and should be lauded for overcoming great odds to succeed in our society. He also gave kudos to

the family members and caregivers of those individuals affected.

“During Down Syndrome Awareness Month, we celebrate the significant contributions that people with Down syndrome make to their families, to their communities and to our nation,” Trump said. “We also salute the family members, caregivers, medical professionals and advocates who have dedicated themselves to ensuring that these extraordinary people enjoy lives filled with love and increasing opportunity. As a result of these remarkable efforts, people with Down syndrome are living longer, more enriching lives than ever before.

“This month, we renew our nation’s strong commitment to promoting the health, well-being and inherent dignity of all children and adults with Down syndrome. Through sustained advancements in education, research and advocacy, we will further empower those with Down syndrome to pursue the American Dream of independence, pride in work and full participation in civil society. We will also continue to increase public awareness regarding the true nature of this condition and to dispel the stubborn myths about the degree to which it is disabling.

reported in August that nearly 100 percent of women who received a positive test for Down syndrome terminated their pregnancies. The report says that the law in Iceland permits abortion after 16 weeks if the fetus has a deformity. Down syndrome is included in that category.

The U.S. has an estimated termination for Down syndrome of 67 percent (as of 2011), while in France, it’s 77 percent (2015) and in Denmark, it’s 98 percent (2015). {eo}