

reading and mathematics. And we are working to get computers into every classroom and to expand the use of educational technology.

We are also seeking ways to empower Native American communities and help them prosper. My Administration is expanding consultation and collaborative decision-making with tribal governments to promote self-determination. We also support tribal government economic development initiatives, particularly those that increase or enhance the infrastructure necessary for long-term economic growth. My New Markets Initiative seeks to leverage public and private investment to boost economic development in areas that have not shared in our recent national prosperity. In July, I visited the Pine Ridge Reservation of the Oglala Sioux, as part of my New Markets Tour, to explore opportunities for economic development in Indian Country.

Among the most serious barriers to economic growth facing tribal communities is a lack of housing, physical infrastructure, and essential services. My Administration is working with tribal leaders to build and renovate affordable housing on tribal lands, bring quality drinking water to economically distressed Indian communities, and improve public safety. We are moving to assist tribal governments in developing the physical infrastructure needed for economic development, including roads, fiber-optic cabling, and electric power lines.

In working together to shape a brighter future for Indian Country, we must not lose sight of the rich history of Native Americans. Just weeks ago, the Smithsonian Institution broke ground on the National Mall for the National Museum of the American Indian. This wonderful facility will preserve and celebrate the art, history, and culture of America's indigenous peoples. It is also fitting that the first U.S. dollar coin of the new millennium will bear the likeness of Sacajawea and her infant son—an image that captures the importance of our shared history.

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 November 1999 as National American Indian Heritage Month. I urge all Americans, as well as their elected representatives at the Federal, State, local, and tribal levels, to observe this month with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities.

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

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Proclamation 7248 of November 8, 1999

Veterans Day, 1999

*By the President of the United States of America
A Proclamation*

Throughout U.S. history, Americans have kept a special place of honor in their hearts for our veterans; and for more than 70 years, we have

set aside each November 11 to recognize the men and women who have so valiantly served America. On this day, we remember and pay tribute to the millions of patriots whose courage and sacrifice have secured our freedom—from those who suffered through the harsh winter at Valley Forge to those who preserved our Union on the battlefields of Gettysburg to those who turned back the tide of tyranny and hatred on the beaches of Normandy to those who have kept the peace and defended our values around the globe.

Since the first days of our independence, brave Americans have stepped forward to protect our country and promote our ideals. Some 48 million men and women from every corner of our country and from every walk of life have served in our Nation's Armed Forces, and 41 million of them have done so under hostile conditions. Their service often put them in harm's way, far from home and family, and too often it cost them their lives.

Time and again, America has called on her men and women in uniform to protect our national security, to advance our national interests, and to preserve our rights and freedoms. And time and again, our Armed Forces have responded by overcoming daunting challenges to achieve hard-fought victories. In battles that would determine our Nation's destiny, in wars that would decide the fate of the free world, in peacekeeping missions that would change forever the lives and futures of peoples fighting oppression, they have persevered in the face of adversity and have prevailed.

Such victories do not come easily. They exact a heavy toll in lives cut short, in families bereft, in human potential unfulfilled. It is a toll paid by the 25 million veterans still living among us, who every day carry with them the indelible memories of sacrifices made, battles fought, and comrades lost.

To pay tribute to those who have served in our Armed Forces, the Congress has provided (5 U.S.C. 6103(a)) that November 11 of each year shall be set aside as a legal public holiday to honor America's veterans. For all their sacrifices and for the peace, prosperity, and liberty their service has secured for us, our Nation owes our veterans a profound debt of gratitude. In commemorating this solemn day, we express our deep appreciation for the duties they have discharged.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim Thursday, November 11, 1999, as Veterans Day. I urge all Americans to honor our veterans through appropriate public ceremonies and private prayers. I call upon Federal, State, and local government officials to display the flag of the United States and to encourage and participate in patriotic activities in their communities. I invite civic and fraternal organizations, places of worship, schools, businesses, unions, and the media to support this national observance with suitable commemorative expressions and programs.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this eighth day of November, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-nine, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-fourth.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON