

Proc. 7197

Title 3—The President

the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-third.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Proclamation 7197 of May 17, 1999

National Defense Transportation Day and National Transportation Week, 1999

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

Throughout America's history, our transportation system has played a profound role in the security and development of our Nation. As early as the Revolutionary War, America's merchant marine carried cargo to help defend our national interests and uphold our democratic ideals. In the 1800's, as many Americans migrated westward, new roads and canals facilitated travel and trade, helping to unify our young country and to bolster our growing economy. And in the 20th century, few innovations have had the same far-reaching effect on our society as the airplane—now a critical part of our national defense and our robust economy.

Representing 11 percent of the U.S. economy and related to one in every seven American jobs, today's transportation industry continues to grow and thrive. Millions of Americans rely on its readiness for business and leisure travel. And we can be pleased by the improved safety of our transportation system. In 1998, the rate of traffic fatalities in America fell to its lowest level since record-keeping began in 1966. Last year also marked a milestone in aviation safety when, for the first time in our history, there were no reported passenger fatalities on scheduled U.S. air carriers.

Securing the continued strength and safety of our transportation system is among my highest priorities as President. My Administration has acted aggressively to improve the security of our rail system, and, by initiating a new program to encourage Americans to buckle their seat belts, we are working to improve the safety of vehicular travel. As we face the challenges of a new century, we must build on these achievements to ensure that our transportation system remains the finest in the world.

Last year, I was proud to sign into law the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21), the largest public works legislation in our Nation's history. TEA-21 invests \$198 billion in our transportation infrastructure. The Livable Communities for the 21st Century Initiative represents another integral part of our transportation strategy for the coming century, providing communities with tools and resources to ease traffic congestion, preserve green space, and pursue wise regional growth strategies. These comprehensive programs will help communities across America create a higher quality of living and secure sustainable economic growth as we work to forge more livable communities for ourselves and for the next generation of Americans.

In recognition of the ongoing contributions of our Nation's transportation system and in honor of the devoted professionals who work to sustain its

tradition of excellence, the United States Congress, by joint resolution approved May 16, 1957 (36 U.S.C. 120), has designated the third Friday in May of each year as “National Defense Transportation Day” and, by joint resolution approved May 14, 1962 (36 U.S.C. 133), declared that the week in which that Friday falls be designated “National Transportation Week.”

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim Friday, May 21, 1999, as National Defense Transportation Day and May 16 through May 22, 1999, as National Transportation Week. I urge all Americans to observe these occasions with appropriate ceremonies, programs, and activities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this seventeenth day of May, 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-third.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Proclamation 7198 of May 20, 1999

National Safe Boating Week, 1999

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

In America, a country bordered by oceans and blessed with numerous lakes and rivers, recreational boating enjoys a long and proud tradition. From generation to generation, families pass on their appreciation of the water and share the pleasures of nature’s beauty and bounty. Annually, more than 74 million Americans take part in recreational boating activities with their families and friends.

While boating is a wonderful form of recreation, it can also present many dangers. Human error and poor judgment contribute to most recreational boating accidents. Recent statistics indicate that 86 percent of all boating accidents are attributable to operator-controlled factors, such as excessive speed, inattention, failure to follow required navigation rules and practices, and lack of knowledge about boats and the boating environment.

Even with adequate training and preparation, boaters can still have accidents. That is why it is crucial for everyone using our waterways to wear a life jacket. Recent U.S. Coast Guard statistics indicate that 90 percent of drowning victims were not wearing life preservers. Most of the victims were small boat users—many in remote areas. In such potentially dangerous circumstances, wearing a life jacket is essential. This message is so important that the National Safe Boating Campaign theme for the second year is “Boat Smart from the Start! Wear Your Life Jacket!”

Many recreational boating organizations, including the National Safe Boating Council and the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators, as well as the U.S. Coast Guard, other Federal agencies, and State and local governments continue to help save lives by reminding us of the importance of wearing life preservers and following safe navigation rules. However, each individual must take responsibility for his or her personal