

Proc. 8473

Title 3—The President

This week presents a window of opportunity for us to prevent a possible third wave of H1N1 flu in the United States. I strongly encourage those who have not yet received the H1N1 flu vaccine to do so. Visit flu.gov to find vaccination sites in communities across our country and to stay informed. Together, we can all fight the H1N1 flu and help protect our families, friends, and neighbors.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, BARACK OBAMA, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim the week of January 10–16, 2010, as National Influenza Vaccination Week. I encourage all Americans to observe this week by getting the H1N1 flu vaccine if they have not yet done so, and by asking their families, friends, and co-workers to do the same.

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

BARACK OBAMA

Proclamation 8473 of January 15, 2010

Martin Luther King, Jr., Federal Holiday, 2010

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

The Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., challenged our Nation to recognize that our individual liberty relies upon our common equality. In communities marred by division and injustice, the movement he built from the ground up forced open doors to negotiation. The strength of his leadership was matched only by the power of his words, which still call on us to perfect those sacred ideals enshrined in our founding documents.

“We have an opportunity to make America a better Nation,” Dr. King said on the eve of his death. “I may not get there with you. But I want you to know tonight that we, as a people, will get to the promised land.” Though we have made great strides since the turbulent era of Dr. King’s movement, his work and our journey remain unfinished. Only when our children are free to pursue their full measure of success—unhindered by the color of their skin, their gender, the faith in their heart, the people they love, or the fortune of their birth—will we have reached our destination.

Today, we are closer to fulfilling America’s promise of economic and social justice because we stand on the shoulders of giants like Dr. King, yet our future progress will depend on how we prepare our next generation of leaders. We must fortify their ladders of opportunity by correcting social injustice, breaking the cycle of poverty in struggling communities, and reinvesting in our schools. Education can unlock a child’s potential and remains our strongest weapon against injustice and inequality.

Recognizing that our Nation has yet to reach Dr. King’s promised land is not an admission of defeat, but a call to action. In these challenging times, too many Americans face limited opportunities, but our capacity to support

each other remains limitless. Today, let us ask ourselves what Dr. King believed to be life's most urgent and persistent question: "What are you doing for others?" Visit www.MLKDay.gov to find Martin Luther King, Jr., Day of Service projects across our country.

Dr. King devoted his life to serving others, and his message transcends national borders. The devastating earthquake in Haiti, and the urgent need for humanitarian support, reminds us that our service and generosity of spirit must also extend beyond our immediate communities. As our Government continues to bring our resources to bear on the international emergency in Haiti, I ask all Americans who want to contribute to this effort to visit www.WhiteHouse.gov/HaitiEarthquake. By lifting up our brothers and sisters through dedication and service—both at home and around the world—we honor Dr. King's memory and reaffirm our common humanity.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, BARACK OBAMA, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim January 18, 2010, as the Martin Luther King, Jr., Federal Holiday. I encourage all Americans to observe this day with appropriate civic, community, and service programs in honor of Dr. King's life and lasting legacy.

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

BARACK OBAMA

Proclamation 8474 of January 15, 2010

Religious Freedom Day, 2010

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

Long before our Nation's independence, weary settlers sought refuge on our shores to escape religious persecution on other continents. Recognizing their strife and toil, it was the genius of America's forefathers to protect our freedom of religion, including the freedom to practice none at all. Many faiths are now practiced in our Nation's houses of worship, and that diversity is built upon a rich tradition of religious tolerance. On this day, we commemorate an early realization of our Nation's founding ideals: Virginia's 1786 Statute for Religious Freedom.

The Virginia Statute was more than a law. It was a statement of principle, declaring freedom of religion as the natural right of all humanity—not a privilege for any government to give or take away. Penned by Thomas Jefferson and championed in the Virginia legislature by James Madison, it barred compulsory support of any church and ensured the freedom of all people to profess their faith openly, without fear of persecution. Five years later, the First Amendment of our Bill of Rights followed the Virginia Statute's model, stating, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof . . .".