

of our interconnected world. Together, we will continue to build on our partnerships of equality and shared responsibility and demonstrate that change is possible, every nation can be free, and there can be no denying the dignity and human rights our countries uphold.

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 April 14, 2011, as Pan American Day and April 10 through April 16, 2011, as Pan American Week. I urge the Governors of the 50 States, the Governor of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and the officials of other areas under the flag of the United States of America to honor these observances with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

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

BARACK OBAMA

Proclamation 8652 of April 8, 2011

National Former Prisoner of War Recognition Day, 2011

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

The men and women of the United States Armed Forces have faced innumerable challenges while dedicating their lives to the defense of our liberties. Contending with perilous combat zones, deployment overseas, and long absences from home, generations of service members have answered America's call in its hour of need. On National Former Prisoner of War Recognition Day, a grateful Nation acknowledges a debt that can never be repaid and honors those who faced the most unfathomable of challenges with the utmost bravery and conviction.

We pay solemn tribute to those American sons and daughters who have endured unimaginable hardship at the hands of foreign captors. Often faced with deplorable physical and mental treatment, the tremendous personal sacrifice of these warriors exemplifies the highest of ideals—honor, duty, and selfless service. We also pay tribute to the families and friends of these service members, who embody the same qualities of bravery and sacrifice exhibited by their loved ones, and bear a burden silently measured in sleepless nights and missed birthdays.

America cherishes those veterans who have returned home after imprisonment on foreign soil. We remain dedicated to fulfilling the sacred trust to care for all who have borne the battle. This day and every day, each of these heroes holds a special place of honor in our hearts and the well-earned support of a thankful Nation.

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 April 9, 2011, as National Former Prisoner of War Recognition Day. I call upon all Americans

to observe this day of remembrance by honoring our service members, veterans, and all American prisoners of war. I also call upon Federal, State, and local government officials and organizations to observe this day with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

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

BARACK OBAMA

Proclamation 8653 of April 11, 2011

National Equal Pay Day, 2011

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

Generations of women have fought for the advancement of their sisters, daughters, and themselves in acts of great courage—reaching for and winning the right to vote, breaking barriers in America’s universities and boardrooms, and flooding the modern workforce with skilled talent. While our Nation has come far, obstacles continue to exist for working women, who still earn less on average than working men. Each year, National Equal Pay Day reflects how far into the current year women must work to match what men earned in the previous year. On National Equal Pay Day, we rededicate ourselves to carrying forward the fight for true economic equality for all, regardless of gender.

When the Equal Pay Act was signed into law in 1963, women earned 59 cents for every dollar earned by men. Though women today are more likely than men to attend and graduate from college, women still earn an average of only about 77 cents for every dollar a man earns. Even when accounting for factors such as experience, education, industry, and hours, this wage gap persists. Over the course of her lifetime, this gap will cost a woman and her family lost wages, reduced pensions, and diminished Social Security benefits. Though we have made great strides, wage discrimination is real and women are still more likely to live in poverty. These inequities remind us to work even harder to close the gaps that still exist.

At a time when families across this country are struggling to make ends meet, National Equal Pay Day reminds us that achieving equal pay for equal work is not just a women’s issue—it is a family issue. In today’s world, women represent both powerful consumers and vital wage earners. Women make up nearly half of the labor force and mothers are the primary or co-breadwinners in two-thirds of families. When women are not paid fairly, the families that depend on their earnings suffer.

That is why one of my first acts as President was to sign the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act, a law that empowers women who have been discriminated against in their salaries to have their day in court to make it right. I established the National Equal Pay Enforcement Task Force to identify persistent challenges to equal pay enforcement and ensure equal pay laws are vigorously enforced throughout our country. My Administration also published