

Proclamation 8816 of May 11, 2012**Military Spouse Appreciation Day, 2012**

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

For more than two centuries, our freedom has been safeguarded by brave patriots who have stepped forward and sworn an oath to defend the principles upon which our Republic was founded. Alongside these selfless heroes, our Nation's military spouses also offer tremendous service and make great sacrifices for our country. On Military Spouse Appreciation Day, we recognize the important role our military families play in keeping our Armed Forces strong and our country safe.

Our military spouses are a vital part of communities across America and around the world. We know them as our neighbors and friends, colleagues and coaches, teachers and nurses. They move from duty station to duty station, picking up their families and careers whenever their country asks. They keep their households running while dealing with the strain of deployment. They support our wounded warriors, preserve the legacies of our fallen, and find ways to give back to our country day after day.

The strength and readiness of America's military depends on the well-being of our military spouses and families, and my Administration remains committed to ensuring they have the support and resources they deserve. Across Federal agencies, we have made major investments in education and childcare for military families, increased the availability of mortgage assistance to military homeowners, and extended new opportunities for veterans and their loved ones under the Post-9/11 GI Bill.

Inspired by the stories of our military spouses' resilience and service, First Lady Michelle Obama and Dr. Jill Biden launched the Joining Forces initiative to encourage all Americans to recognize, honor, and serve our military families. In only 1 year, Joining Forces has rallied American businesses to hire tens of thousands of veterans and military spouses, schools have improved educational opportunities for military children, and the medical community has vowed better care for military families. And from small towns to big cities, Americans have shown their gratitude by pledging hours of service and taking on projects that support military families in their communities. To learn more and get involved, visit www.JoiningForces.gov.

America's service members represent only one percent of our population, but they shoulder the responsibility of protecting our entire Nation and defending the ideals we hold dear. Just as we bear a sacred obligation to serve our men and women in uniform as well as they have served us, we share an equal responsibility to care for their extraordinary spouses who are heroes on the home front. On Military Spouse Appreciation Day, let us honor the unparalleled contributions of our military spouses and reaffirm our commitment to ensuring the priorities of our military families remain the priorities of our 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 May 11, 2012, as Military

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Title 3—The President

Spouse Appreciation Day. I call upon the people of the United States to honor military spouses with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this eleventh day of May, in the year of our Lord two thousand twelve, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-sixth.

BARACK OBAMA

Proclamation 8817 of May 11, 2012

Mother’s Day, 2012

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

Mothers are cornerstones of our families and our communities. On Mother’s Day, we honor the remarkable women who strive and sacrifice every day to ensure their children have every opportunity to pursue their dreams.

Our Nation first came together to celebrate Mother’s Day on May 11, 1913, with the introduction of a House Resolution requesting President Woodrow Wilson, Members of Congress, and officials across the Federal Government wear white carnations in honor of America’s mothers. Today, we continue to mark Mother’s Day by paying tribute to the women who shape our characters and set our families up for success. Through their example, our children learn the principles of hard work, compassion, service, and personal responsibility. Through their encouragement and unconditional support, they instill the confidence and values so vital to our children’s success.

Mothers raise children under an array of circumstances, and many work long hours inside and outside the home balancing myriad demands. Mothers are leaders and trailblazers in every part of our society—from classrooms to boardrooms, at home and overseas, on the beat and on the bench. We celebrate the efforts of all our Nation’s mothers, and we recognize that when more households are relying on women as primary or co-breadwinners, the success of women in our economy is essential to the success of our families, our communities, and our country. That is why I created the White House Council on Women and Girls as one of my first acts in office—to ensure we integrate the needs of women and girls into every decision we make. I was proud to sign the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act, which continues to help women secure equal pay for equal work, and my Administration continues to promote workplace flexibility so no mother has to choose between her job and her child. And because of the Affordable Care Act, women finally have more power to make choices about their health care, and they have expanded access to a wide variety of preventive services such as mammograms at no additional cost.

Today, let us pay respect to mothers across America by embracing the women who continue to guide and inspire us, and by holding fast to the memories of those who live on in our hearts.

The Congress, by a joint resolution approved May 8, 1914 (38 Stat. 770), has designated the second Sunday in May each year as “Mother’s Day” and requested the President to call for its appropriate observance.