

Proclamation 9189 of October 8, 2014

Leif Erikson Day, 2014

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

At a time when much of the world remained unknown, Leif Erikson—a son of Iceland and grandson of Norway—left his Nordic homeland and sailed westward across an unrelenting ocean. Landing in present-day Canada more than 1,000 years ago, Erikson and his crew became the first Europeans known to reach North America. In this new world, they discovered a land rich with natural resources and established their first settlement, Vinland. Today, we recognize their courageous spirit and the daring exploration that forged a path for centuries of exchange, innovation, and opportunity.

More than 800 years after this historic voyage, a group of Norwegian immigrants boarded a ship named *Restauration*, and with the same sense of hope and determination shared by Erikson and his crew, they crossed the Atlantic in pursuit of the freedoms promised in America. On October 9, 1825, they arrived in New York City, becoming the first organized group of immigrants from Norway to reach the United States. Together, they wrote a chapter of our two countries' interconnected story and opened the doors to opportunity for the hundreds of thousands of Norwegians who would follow, enriching our communities and bettering our Nation.

This year, we also celebrate the 200th anniversary of the adoption of Norway's constitution, a charter influenced by America's founding documents, and we are reminded of the powerful bonds between our two nations and the values and ideals our people embrace. As we reflect on our common past, we rededicate ourselves to preserving all that has brought us together: the story of a fearless leader who reached for new possibilities; our shared commitment to self-determination and freedom; and the simple truth that has drawn immigrants to our shores—in America, anyone who works hard should be able to get ahead.

Today, there is more work to do to strengthen these promises, and we require bold thinkers and explorers to achieve what we know can be possible. The far reaches of our universe and the depths of our oceans remain unexplored, and the next frontiers in science, medicine, and technology await a new generation of innovators and entrepreneurs. As a Nation, let us carry forward the spirit of Leif Erikson and seize the future together.

To honor Leif Erikson and celebrate our Nordic-American heritage, the Congress, by joint resolution (Public Law 88–566) approved on September 2, 1964, has authorized the President of the United States to proclaim October 9 of each year as “Leif Erikson Day.”

NOW, THEREFORE, I, BARACK OBAMA, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim October 9, 2014, as Leif Erikson Day. I call upon all Americans to observe this day with appropriate ceremonies, activities, and programs to honor our rich Nordic-American heritage.

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

BARACK OBAMA

Proclamation 9190 of October 10, 2014

National School Lunch Week, 2014

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

Ensuring access to balanced, healthy meals for all young people is essential to their success, and it is our responsibility as a Nation. Today, more than 30 million children depend on the National School Lunch Program for daily nutrition, and more than 13 million children are able to start their school day with a full stomach because of the School Breakfast Program. For many young people, these programs are the only regular source of food. That is why it is more important than ever to strengthen them and make sure they are supporting healthy lifestyles in classrooms across America. During National School Lunch Week, we encourage schools to expand access to nutritious food options, and we salute all those who work in our Nation's school cafeterias and food preparation centers. Every day they provide essential meals to America's students, contributing to their well-being and helping make sure they can fulfill their potential.

In 1946, President Harry Truman signed the National School Lunch Act, which provided meals for over 7 million children in its first year. Since then, more than 220 billion lunches have been served, and my Administration is proud to continue building on this legacy—not just by increasing access to breakfasts and lunches, but also by working to improve their quality and nutritional value. When more than one-third of American children and adolescents are overweight or obese—and as a result, are at risk for conditions like high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and Type 2 diabetes—ensuring access to healthy foods at schools helps support academic performance and improves children's overall health.

In 2010, I signed the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act in order to raise nutritional standards and expand access to healthy meals. This year—in many of the more than 22,000 eligible schools across our country—educators and food service professionals are able to serve all their students free, nutritious breakfasts and lunches. Students now have more opportunities to eat healthy foods than ever before, including new options in vending machines and a la carte lines. And First Lady Michelle Obama's *Let's Move!* initiative has brought communities, schools, and elected officials together to promote nutrition and healthy lifestyles and empower children to make healthy choices in school and at home.

By expanding access to nutritious meals, we can help put young people on the path to good health from their earliest days. When we provide our children with opportunities to live prosperous and productive lives, we build