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# Presidential Documents

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Title 3—

Proclamation 6947 of October 29, 1996

The President

National Adoption Month, 1996

By the President of the United States of America

## A Proclamation

Thousands of American children have never known what it is like to belong to a family—to grow up with the comfort and security that most of us take for granted. They are children whose parents, for a variety of reasons, are unable or unwilling to care for them. Instead, these children often find themselves drifting from home to home in foster care. They live every day without mothers or fathers to guide them, nurture them, and tell them that they are special.

Adoption is a commonsense solution that places children in permanent homes with parents who will offer them love and security. National Adoption Month is a time for all Americans to reflect on the rewards of joining children who need families with adults who seek the responsibilities and joys of parenthood. This month is an opportunity to celebrate family, especially families formed by adoptions.

Our Nation has no greater responsibility than to ensure that every child has the chance to live up to his or her God-given potential. We can help meet that challenge by identifying a permanent, loving family for every child waiting in the foster care system.

Among the approximately 86,000 children who will await adoption within the next few years are tens of thousands with special needs. Many of these, through no fault of their own, wait years for adoption. Yet when these children are accepted into loving family environments, they can bring the same joy, affection, and love to their adoptive families as other children bring.

In recent years, we have made important strides in encouraging parents to adopt. I have signed legislation to help facilitate adoptions by prohibiting discrimination based on race or ethnicity in placement decisions, increasing the recruitment of adoptive parents, and providing a tax credit to families who adopt children.

Much remains to be done, however. As a Nation, we must continue to work to remove obstacles to adoption, to recruit new adoptive families, to offer financial incentives for placements, and to provide support to parents adopting children with special needs. Nothing should stand in the way of providing every boy and girl in America the permanent, loving home each of them deserves. Children are, after all, our country's most precious resource and our most important responsibility.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim November 1996 as National Adoption Month. I urge the people of the United States to observe this month with appropriate activities and programs and to participate in efforts to find permanent homes for waiting children.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-ninth day of October, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-six, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-first.

*William Clinton*

[FR Doc. 96-28234

Filed 10-30-96; 11:52 am]

Billing code 3195-01-P