Whereas literacy is a necessary tool for survival in our society; 
Whereas 35,000,000 Americans today read at a level which is less 
than necessary for full survival needs; 
Whereas there are 27,000,000 adults in the United States who 
cannot read, whose resources are left untapped, and who are 
unable to offer their full contribution to society; 
Whereas illiteracy is growing rapidly, as 2,300,000 persons, includ­
ing 1,200,000 legal and illegal immigrants, 1,000,000 high school 
dropouts, and 100,000 refugees, are added to the pool of illiterates 
annually; 
Whereas the annual cost of illiteracy to the United States in terms 
of welfare expenditures, crime, prison expenses, lost revenues, and 
industrial and military accidents has been estimated at 
$225,000,000,000; 
Whereas the competitiveness of the United States is eroded by the 
presence in the workplace of millions of Americans who are 
functionally or technologically illiterate; 
Whereas there is a direct correlation between the number of illit­
erate adults unable to perform at the standard necessary for 
available employment and the money allocated to child welfare 
and unemployment compensation; 
Whereas the percentage of illiterates in proportion to population 
size is higher for blacks and Hispanics, resulting in increased 
economic and social discrimination against these minorities; 
Whereas the prison population represents the single highest con­
centration of adult illiteracy; 
Whereas 1,000,000 children in the United States between the ages of 
12 and 17 cannot read above a 3rd grade level, 13 percent of all 
17-year-olds are functionally illiterate, and 15 percent of gradu­
ates of urban high schools read at less than a 6th grade level; 
Whereas 85 percent of the juveniles who appear in criminal court 
are functionally illiterate; 
Whereas the 47 percent illiteracy rate among black youths is ex­
pected to increase to 50 percent by 1990; 
Whereas one-half of all heads of households cannot read past the 8th 
grade level and one-third of all mothers on welfare are function­
ally illiterate; 
Whereas the cycle of illiteracy continues because the children of 
iliterate parents are often illiterate themselves because of the 
lack of support they receive from their home environment; 
Whereas Federal, State, municipal, and private literacy programs 
have only been able to reach 5 percent of the total illiterate 
population; 
Whereas it is vital to call attention to the problem of illiteracy, to 
understand the severity of the problem and its detrimental effects
on our society, and to reach those who are illiterate and unaware of the free services and help available to them; and

Whereas it is also necessary to recognize and thank the thousands of volunteers who are working to promote literacy and provide support to the millions of illiterates in need of assistance: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That July 2, 1987, is designated as "National Literacy Day", and the President is authorized and requested to issue a proclamation calling upon the people of the United States to observe such day with appropriate ceremonies and activities.