

demonstrate their courage and patriotism during armed conflicts. Indeed, during World War II alone, more than 6,000 civilian seafarers lost their lives in efforts to deliver essential reinforcements and supplies to our Armed Forces and those of our Allies around the world. Despite the loss of more than 700 U.S.-flag merchant ships, our merchant seafarers successfully transported troops and kept open vital supply lines.

Today, the merchant marine continues to play a vital role in trade and defense. The United States' national sealift objective remains the same: ensuring that sufficient military and civil maritime resources will be available to meet defense deployment and essential economic requirements in support of our national security strategy.

Our new, comprehensive national transportation policy supports this objective and recognizes the need to reform Federal maritime programs in order to enhance both the competitiveness and the sealift capacity of the American merchant marine. In accordance with this policy, the Department of Transportation's goal is to review and restructure Federal maritime programs to promote cost efficiency in the U.S. fleet; to strengthen the fleet's competitive position in the international market; and to encourage necessary modernization and expansion.

In recognition of the importance of the U.S. merchant marine, the Congress, by joint resolution approved May 20, 1933, has designated May 22 of each year as "National Maritime Day" and has authorized and requested the President to issue annually a proclamation calling for its appropriate observance. This date was chosen to commemorate the day in 1819 when the SS SAVANNAH left Savannah, Georgia, on the first transatlantic steamship voyage.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE BUSH, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim May 22, 1990, as National Maritime Day. I urge the people of the United States to observe this day by displaying the flag of the United States at their homes and other suitable places, and I request that all ships sailing under the American flag dress ship on that day.

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

GEORGE BUSH

Proclamation 6138 of May 23, 1990

Older Americans Month, 1990

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

Each May, during Older Americans Month, we gratefully acknowledge the many contributions that older men and women have made—and continue to make—to our Nation. With faith, hard work, and an abiding love of freedom, they have helped to make the 20th century the

American Century. Today they share a wealth of wisdom and experience with their families, neighbors, and co-workers.

During this year's observance of Older Americans Month, we also celebrate the Silver Anniversary of the Older Americans Act. Signed into law in 1965, this important legislation reaffirmed the rights and dignity of America's senior citizens and established a framework for programs designed to help them remain active, independent, and productive members of society.

The Older Americans Act created the Administration on Aging as the Federal focal point and advocate for our Nation's older citizens. Since the signing of the Act, a nationwide network of State and Area Agencies on Aging has emerged. These agencies are working to dispel myths about aging; to protect older Americans from exploitation and discrimination; and to provide a range of services and opportunities they need and deserve. Last year alone, 9 million older men and women participated in programs sponsored under the Act. The assistance provided through such programs includes transportation, meals, supportive in-home services, and employment.

Thanks, in part, to the greater respect and well-being they enjoy as a result of such efforts, millions of older Americans are now remaining in the work force past the traditional "retirement age." Indeed, many are pursuing second careers, while others continue to enrich our communities and country through volunteer work. Whether they hold jobs, volunteer, or quietly devote their time to family and friends, older Americans are a great blessing to us, and all of them merit our appreciation and support.

Thus, as we celebrate all that has been accomplished in the 25 years since the enactment of the Older Americans Act, let us renew our determination to ensure that this progress continues. We must continue to promote, in every community, programs that are both accessible to older persons and their families and flexible enough to meet their individual needs.

In the coming decades, meeting this goal will become increasingly important. Americans 85 years of age and over will constitute one of the fastest-growing segments of our population, and, one American in five will be 65 or older.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE BUSH, 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 May 1990 as Older Americans Month. I call upon the American people to observe this month with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities.

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

GEORGE BUSH