

dress code policies. We have strictly enforced the policy of zero tolerance for guns. Last year alone, more than 6,000 students had guns taken from them and were sent home. This month, we will begin distributing a guide—*Early Warning, Timely Response: A Guide to Safe Schools*—to help all schools prevent violence before it starts. At my direction, the Secretary of Education and the Attorney General developed this guide to help school officials recognize and respond to the early signs of student violence. Later this fall, we will hold the first ever White House Conference on School Safety to develop effective strategies to keep our schools safe, disciplined, and drug-free.

My Administration also supports legislative initiatives that encourage literacy and learning at every age—from expanding the Head Start program for preschoolers to providing trained reading tutors to elementary school children to offering college aid for low-income students. We are working with the Congress to fund the Administration's proposal to strengthen teacher training programs and provide scholarships to 35,000 well-prepared teachers who commit to teaching in underserved urban or rural schools.

The quality of America's educational system will determine the shape of our children's future and the success of our Nation. As America's students go back to school this year, let us renew our commitment to ensuring that the doors of every classroom open onto a future bright with possibility for every child.

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 September 6 through September 12, 1998, as a time when America Goes Back to School. I encourage parents, schools, community and State leaders, businesses, civic and religious organizations, and the people of the United States to observe this week with appropriate ceremonies and activities expressing support for high academic standards and meaningful involvement in schools and colleges and the students and families they serve.

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

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Proclamation 7119 of September 10, 1998

Minority Enterprise Development Week, 1998

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

America's free enterprise system has always been a path to inclusion and empowerment. Under this system, generations of Americans have built good lives for themselves and their families—rising as high as their skills, effort, and determination can take them. But for minority entrepreneurs, the path has not always been free of obstacles. Sometimes held back by economic, social, and educational disadvantages,

too often denied opportunities because of racial and ethnic prejudice, many minority men and women have had to struggle for equal access to the capital, tools, training, and services they need to build and maintain successful businesses.

My Administration remains committed to providing opportunities for all entrepreneurs, and we are determined to ensure the full inclusion of minority business enterprises in the economic mainstream of our Nation. The Minority Business Development Agency at the Department of Commerce continues to promote minority business growth and to create new initiatives to ensure that minority business men and women have access to the capital, information, and training they need to compete in today's domestic and global markets. Last year, the Small Business Administration (SBA) made a record \$2.6 billion in loans to more than 10,000 minority-owned businesses; over the last 4 years, loans to minority borrowers have nearly tripled. And earlier this year, the SBA entered into partnership agreements with three leading minority business organizations as part of a 3-year outreach initiative. This initiative is designed to increase dramatically the SBA's financial, technical, and procurement assistance for minority entrepreneurs. These efforts will help to ensure that America's growing number of minority entrepreneurs are equipped to succeed.

Strong and successful minority enterprises benefit us all. The goods and services produced by minority-owned firms create jobs, spark community reinvestment and neighborhood pride, and increase America's productivity. With their imagination, innovative spirit, and willingness to take risks, minority entrepreneurs have made important contributions to the remarkable growth of our economy during the past 5 years. Since the beginning of my Administration, we have created more than 16 million new jobs and unemployment has reached its lowest level in 30 years. But to sustain and build on this success, we must utilize the energy and creativity of every American.

As we observe Minority Enterprise Development Week, we recognize and honor the extraordinary contributions that minority entrepreneurs make to our Nation's strength and prosperity, and we reaffirm our determination to help them make the most of today's dynamic economy.

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 September 20 through September 26, 1998, as Minority Enterprise Development Week, and I call upon all Americans to join together with minority business entrepreneurs across the country in appropriate observances.

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

WILLIAM J. CLINTON