

(HHS) Donna Shalala launched the National Organ and Tissue Donation Initiative to raise awareness of the successes of transplantation and to educate our citizens about the urgent and continuing need for organ and tissue donations. Building on this effort, the Health Care Financing Administration now requires hospitals participating in Medicaid and Medicare to notify organ procurement organizations of all deaths and imminent deaths at their facilities and to train their personnel to discuss donation with the families of potential donors. Judging from the positive impact of similar legislation in Pennsylvania, we anticipate that this new Federal regulation will substantially increase the number of donations throughout the country.

Becoming a donor is simple, requiring only that we complete and carry a donor card and inform our families and friends about our wish to donate. This second step is a critical one because, according to a new study issued by HHS, almost all Americans would agree to donate their loved one's tissue or organs if they knew their loved one had requested it. Fewer than half would consent if they did not know their loved one's wishes.

During National Organ and Tissue Donor Awareness Week, I urge all Americans to become potential donors. By doing so, we can bring new hope and improved lives to thousands of our fellow citizens and hasten the day when no American on the organ transplant waiting list loses the race against time.

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 April 18 through April 24, 1999, as National Organ and Tissue Donor Awareness Week. I urge all health care professionals, educators, the media, public and private organizations concerned with organ donation and transplantation, the clergy, and all Americans to join me in promoting greater awareness and acceptance of this humanitarian action.

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

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

**Proclamation 7186 of April 16, 1999**

**National Volunteer Week, 1999**

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

Helping others—and helping others help themselves—through volunteer work is a great American tradition. Our Nation's dedicated volunteers come from all walks of life, all races, and all ages. Whether they support their communities through their churches, synagogues, or other religious institutions, serve full-time as AmeriCorps members, or spend a few hours a week helping out organizations or individuals in need, America's volunteers are bringing hope and help to their fellow citizens and building a stronger, more compassionate Nation for us all.

Our volunteers know that service is one of the best ways to make a difference in the lives of others—and they are proving that Americans at any stage of life can serve. Thousands of older Americans donate their time to serve as foster grandparents, senior companions, and as part of the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program and other initiatives. As many as 13 million young Americans aged 12 to 17 also volunteer each year, improving their communities, broadening their educational experiences, developing new skills, and increasing their understanding of the responsibilities of citizenship. This week, during National Youth Service Day, young people across our country will participate in service activities and demonstrate with their good works the power of youth to strengthen our Nation.

Volunteers will become increasingly vital to our society as we enter a new millennium. We cannot rely solely on charitable contributions or government programs to address the challenges we see in our communities. Each of us must find our own role and take action as a volunteer, a neighbor, and a citizen. We must work together to ensure that every child has a caring adult in his or her life, a safe place in which to live and grow, a good school to attend, a healthy start in life, and a chance to serve the community. We must continually strive to bring hope and hard work to bear on the human problems we see every day. With warm hearts and willing hands, we can make a lasting difference.

During this week, let us renew our spirit of community, our sense of idealism, and our commitment to service. Let us also honor the invaluable work of the thousands of voluntary, civic, religious, school, and neighborhood groups across our country that are leading the way by serving their fellow Americans and improving the quality of life for us all.

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 April 18 through April 24, 1999, as National Volunteer Week. I call upon all Americans to observe this week with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities to express appreciation to the volunteers among us for their commitment to service and to encourage the spirit of volunteerism in our families and communities.

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

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

**Proclamation 7187 of April 22, 1999**

### **National Crime Victims' Rights Week, 1999**

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

Over the past year, in communities across our Nation, Americans have witnessed with shock and disbelief the painful consequences of hatred and brutality. The beating and murder of Matthew Shepard in Wyo-