

The Congress, by Joint Resolution, approved July 17, 1959 (73 Stat. 212), has authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation designating the third week of July of each year as “Captive Nations Week.”

NOW, THEREFORE, I, BARACK OBAMA, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim July 19 through July 25, 2009, as Captive Nations Week. I call upon the people of the United States to reaffirm our commitment to all those seeking dignity, freedom, and justice.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this seventeenth day of July, in the year of our Lord two thousand nine, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-fourth.

BARACK OBAMA

Proclamation 8397 of July 23, 2009

35th Anniversary of the Legal Services Corporation, 2009

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

Every day the Legal Services Corporation (LSC) breathes life into the timeless ideal, “equal justice under law.” It reaches those who cannot afford the assistance they need and those who would otherwise go without vital representation. Today we recognize the 35 years during which the LSC has moved our Nation and our legal system towards greater equality.

The LSC brings legal counsel to every corner of the Nation. As the largest provider of civil legal aid to the poor, it supports programs that touch families in every State. Persons of all ethnic and racial backgrounds know its great work, and women, who represent 75 percent of LSC-supported clients, especially benefit from its expertise.

The Legal Services Corporation’s work helps improve lives. It allows more people to access the public benefits they deserve, more domestic violence victims to secure the protections they desperately need, and more workers to receive the compensation they have been promised and earned.

During an economic crisis, the work of the LSC is especially important. When families face foreclosure, eviction, or bankruptcy, or when communities are targeted by predatory lenders, they need the help of legal professionals. These scenarios are far too common today. Fortunately, the LSC stands ready to meet these demands.

Because economically vulnerable communities continue to face an unmet need for legal services, my Administration has supported increased funding for the LSC. I have also recommended lifting several unnecessary restrictions on funding so that more people can receive assistance. These changes are critical to the organization’s mission and work.

We have made great progress in protecting the legal rights of our citizens, and the Legal Services Corporation has played a vital role in this story for more than 3 decades. With continued support, it will serve those in need and help our Nation live out its highest ideals.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, BARACK OBAMA, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim July 25, 2009, as the 35th Anniversary of the Legal Services Corporation. I call upon legal professionals and the people of the United States to honor the contributions of this vital organization.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-third day of July, in the year of our Lord two thousand nine, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-fourth.

BARACK OBAMA

Proclamation 8398 of July 24, 2009

Anniversary of the Americans With Disabilities Act, 2009

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

Today we celebrate the 19th anniversary of the enactment of the historic Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Signed into law on July 26, 1990, this landmark legislation established a clear mandate against discrimination on the basis of disability so that people with disabilities would have an equal opportunity to achieve the American Dream.

Our Nation is once again poised to make history for people with disabilities. I am proud to announce that the United States will sign the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in New York on December 13, 2006. The Convention is the first new human rights convention of the 21st century adopted by the United Nations, and it represents a paradigm shift in protecting the human rights of 650 million people with disabilities worldwide. We proudly join the international community in further advancing the rights of people with disabilities.

As we reflect upon the past and look toward a brighter future, we recognize that our country has made great progress. More than ever before, Americans with disabilities enjoy greater access to technology and economic self-sufficiency. More communities are accessible, more children with disabilities learn alongside their peers, and more employers recognize the capabilities of people with disabilities.

Despite these achievements, much work remains to be done. People with disabilities far too often lack the choice to live in communities of their choosing; their unemployment rate is much higher than those without disabilities; they are much likelier to live in poverty; health care is out of reach for too many; and too many children with disabilities are denied a world-class education.