

rity they need to innovate and take risks. We have also enacted new tax cuts and tax credits for small firms. Still, we must do more to empower these companies.

In this year's State of the Union address, I proposed creating a \$30 billion lending fund to help increase the flow of credit to small businesses, and I call on the Congress to pass this legislation quickly. My Administration is also working to extend and enhance Small Business Administration programs that have helped small business owners acquire loans and hire workers.

This week, we celebrate the role of entrepreneurs and small businesses in our national life. They are the engine of our prosperity and a proud reflection of our character. A healthy small business sector will give us vibrant communities, cutting-edge technology, and an American economy that can compete and win in the 21st century.

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 May 23 through May 29, 2010, as Small Business Week. I call upon all Americans to recognize the tremendous contributions of small businesses to our Nation with appropriate programs and activities.

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

BARACK OBAMA

Proclamation 8526 of May 20, 2010

National Maritime Day, 2010

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

Even before our Nation declared independence, our forebears recognized the importance of merchant ships and seafarers to our economic and national security. Since 1775, America's maritime fleet has risen to the challenges before them and worked to meet our country's needs in times of peace and war alike. On National Maritime Day, we recognize the men and women of the United States Merchant Marine for their contributions to America's leadership in the global marketplace, and to our security.

Civilian mariners and their ships have played an important role in equipping our military forces at sea in national conflicts. During World War II, they executed the largest sealift the world had ever known, and thousands gave their lives to help convoys with desperately needed supplies reach our troops. Their service to our Nation continues today. Merchant mariners support military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as humanitarian missions, including the delivery of supplies to Haiti following this year's devastating earthquake.

The United States Merchant Marine also shepherds the safe passage of American goods. They carry our exports to customers around the world and support the flow of domestic commerce on our maritime highways. They help strengthen our Nation's economy; bolster job-creating businesses; and, along with the transportation industry, employ Americans on ships and tugs, and in ports and shipyards. Today, we pay tribute to the United States Merchant Marine, and we honor all those whose tireless work is laying a foundation for growth, prosperity, and leadership in the 21st century.

The Congress, by a 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.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, BARACK OBAMA, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim May 22, 2010, as National Maritime Day. I call upon the people of the United States to mark this observance with appropriate activities, and I encourage all ships sailing under the American flag to dress ship on that day.

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

BARACK OBAMA

Proclamation 8527 of May 28, 2010

African-American Music Appreciation Month, 2010

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

Music can tell a story, assuage our sorrows, provide blessing and redemption, and express a soul's sublime and powerful beauty. It inspires us daily, giving voice to the human spirit. For many, including the African-American community, music unites individuals through a shared heritage. During African-American Music Appreciation Month, we celebrate the extraordinary legacy of African-American singers, composers, and musicians, as well as their indelible contributions to our Nation and our world.

Throughout our history, African-American music has conveyed the hopes and hardships of a people who have struggled, persevered and overcome. Through centuries of injustice, music comforted slaves, fueled a cultural renaissance, and sustained a movement for equality. Today, from the shores of Africa and the islands of the Caribbean to the jazz clubs of New Orleans and the music halls of Detroit, African-American music reflects the rich sounds of many experiences, cultures, and locales.

African-American musicians have created and expanded a variety of musical genres, synthesizing diverse artistic traditions into a distinctive soundscape. The soulful strains of gospel, the harmonic and improvisational innovations of jazz, the simple truth of the blues, the