

**Proclamation 8678 of May 18, 2011****National Maritime Day, 2011**

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

In times of peace or war, the civilians serving in the United States Merchant Marine have helped keep our Nation safe and prosperous. We depend on these men and women serving on our ships and tugs, in our ports and shipyards, close to home or far at sea, to connect businesses, service members, and citizens around the world. On National Maritime Day, we honor their invaluable contributions to America's economic strength and security.

On May 22, 1819, the *SS Savannah* completed the first successful voyage by a steam powered ship across the Atlantic, shepherding in a new age of maritime travel and transport. By the 20th century, the United States maritime trade was booming, fostering exchanges across the world and aiding our military at war. During World War II, Merchant Marines were critical in providing necessary supplies and services to troops abroad, while suffering an extraordinarily high death rate. Hundreds of merchant ships fell to enemy action, and nearly one in thirty mariners did not return home.

United States flag vessels and those who operate them continue to be an integral part of our military operations overseas. They support operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as humanitarian aid missions and disaster relief efforts. Without the steadfast commitment of our mariners, our Nation would not be as prepared to deal with unforeseen events, conflicts, or crises. Their bravery and valor make our waterways safer and more efficient every day.

Today, our maritime industry is a valuable source of skilled employment for American workers, contributing billions of dollars to our economy. It is also a critical part of our transportation system. Last year, my Administration implemented "America's Marine Highway Program," an effort that enables American businesses to participate in improving the safety and environmental sustainability of our waterways. Our mariners' continued work is helping American industry remain competitive in the global economy, pushing us toward a more prosperous and free 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, 2011, as National Maritime Day. I call upon the people of the United States to mark this observance and to display the flag of the United States at their homes and in their communities. I also request that all ships sailing under the American flag dress ship on that day.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this eighteenth day of May, in the year of our Lord two thousand eleven, and of the

Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-fifth.

BARACK OBAMA

**Proclamation 8679 of May 20, 2011**

**National Hurricane Preparedness Week, 2011**

*By the President of the United States of America*

*A Proclamation*

National Hurricane Preparedness Week highlights the importance of planning ahead to protect our families and secure our communities and homes in advance of the upcoming hurricane season.

Hurricanes are powerful storms that can create severe flooding, dangerous storm surges, high winds, and tornadoes. The effects of these storms can be devastating to entire communities and can have long-lasting consequences, including loss of life and property. In addition to threatening coastal areas, hurricanes significantly impact inland locations. Our Nation has seen devastating hurricanes and storms, and we must not let our guard down as we prepare for this year's hurricane season. With tens of millions of Americans living in coastal communities, preparation can enhance our ability to respond to and recover from any natural disaster we might face.

Our Nation's weather forecasters at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Hurricane Center continue to improve the accuracy of their hurricane forecasts. However, we cannot prevent a hurricane from making landfall, and awareness of the threat is not enough—we must translate this knowledge into action, and work together to develop prepared and resilient communities. My Administration recognizes that we must move from a government-centric approach to disaster management to a community-oriented approach that includes all levels of government, the private sector, volunteers, community and faith-based organizations, and the public. A whole community effort is needed to effectively prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate against any disaster.

During National Hurricane Preparedness Week, we emphasize the need for individuals, businesses, nonprofits, and families to prepare emergency plans, create emergency supply kits, and learn evacuation routes. More information on hurricane hazards and details on how to secure buildings and belongings is available at [www.Hurricanes.gov/Prepare](http://www.Hurricanes.gov/Prepare) and [www.Ready.gov](http://www.Ready.gov).

America has seen the heartbreak a hurricane can leave behind. By working together, government, private and nonprofit organizations, emergency responders, and private citizens can help save lives and reduce the damage caused by these storms.

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 22 through May 28, 2011, as National Hurricane Preparedness Week. I call upon government agencies, private organizations, schools, media,