

The right to organize and collectively bargain is a fundamental American value. Since its beginnings in our country, organized labor has raised our living standards and built our middle class. It is the reason we have a minimum wage, weekends away from work to rest and spend time with family, and basic protections in our workplaces. Many Americans today are given opportunities because their parents and grandparents fought for these basic rights and values. The principles upheld by the honorable laborers of generations past and their unions continue to fuel the growth of our economy and a strong middle class.

This year has seen a vigorous fight to protect these rights and values, and on this Labor Day, we reaffirm that collective bargaining is a cornerstone of the American dream. From public employees—including teachers, firefighters, police, and others who perform public services—to workers in private industries, these men and women hold the power of our Nation in their hands.

In the last several years, we have pulled our country back from the brink, through a series of tough economic decisions. While we have come far, great challenges still face us. Many Americans are still struggling, and many are unemployed. My Administration is working tirelessly each day to promote policies that get Americans back to work. We will always strive to keep our fundamental promise that, in America, anyone who works hard and acts responsibly can provide a better future for their children. When we come together, there is no limit to what the American workforce can do.

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 September 5, 2011, as Labor Day. I call upon all public officials and people of the United States to observe this day with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities that acknowledge the tremendous contributions of working Americans and their families.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this second day of September, in the year of our Lord two thousand eleven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-sixth.

BARACK OBAMA

Proclamation 8708 of September 9, 2011

National Days of Prayer and Remembrance, 2011

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

Ten years ago, a bright September day was darkened by the worst terrorist attack on America in our Nation's history. On this tenth anniversary of the tragic events of September 11, 2001, we lift in prayer and remembrance the men, women, and children who died in New York City, in Pennsylvania, and at the Pentagon, and we honor the countless heroes who responded to senseless violence with courage and compassion. We continue to stand with their families and loved ones, while

striving to ensure the legacy of those we lost is a safer, stronger, and more resilient Nation.

Since that day, a generation has come of age bearing the burden of war. The 9/11 Generation of service members and their families has stepped up to defend our security at home and abroad. They volunteer, knowing they might be sent into harm's way, and they uphold the virtues of selflessness and sacrifice that have always been at the center of our Nation's strength. We pay humble tribute to all those who serve in our Armed Forces, and to the thousands of brave Americans who have given their last full measure of devotion during this difficult decade of war.

First responders, law enforcement officials, service members, diplomats—the range of Americans who have dedicated themselves to building a safer world is awe-inspiring. We have put unprecedented pressure on those who attacked us 10 years ago and put al-Qa'ida on the path to defeat. Around the globe, we have joined with allies and partners to support peace, security, prosperity, and universal rights. At home, communities have come together to make us a stronger country, united by our diversity, our character, and our enduring principles.

Today, our Nation still faces great challenges, but this last decade has proven once more that, as a people, we emerge from our trials stronger than before. During these days of prayer and remembrance, a grateful Nation gives thanks to all those who have given of themselves to make us safer. And in memory of the fathers and mothers, sons and daughters, brothers and sisters, and friends and loved ones taken from us 10 years ago, let us join again in common cause to build a more hopeful world.

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 Friday, September 9 through Sunday, September 11, 2011, as National Days of Prayer and Remembrance. I ask that the people of the United States honor and remember the victims of September 11, 2001, and their loved ones through prayer, contemplation, memorial services, the visiting of memorials, the ringing of bells, evening candlelight remembrance vigils, and other appropriate ceremonies and activities. I invite people around the world to participate in this commemoration.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this ninth day of September, in the year of our Lord two thousand eleven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-sixth.

BARACK OBAMA