AUTHENTICATED
U.S. GOVERNMENT
INFORMATION
GPO



relating to same-gender marriage, but it is important to note what this legislation does and does not do.

I have long opposed governmental recognition of same-gender marriages and this legislation is consistent with that position. The act confirms the right of each State to determine its own policy with respect to same-gender marriage and clarifies for purposes of Federal law the operative meaning of the terms ''marriage'' and ''spouse.''

This legislation does not reach beyond those two provisions. It has no effect on any current Federal, State, or local anti-discrimination law and does not constrain the right of Congress or any State or locality to enact anti-discrimination laws. I therefore would take this opportunity to urge Congress to pass the Employment Non-Discrimination Act, an act which would extend employment discrimination protections to gays and lesbians in the workplace. This year the Senate considered this legislation contemporaneously with the act I sign today and failed to pass it by a single vote. I hope that in its next session Congress will pass it expeditiously.

I also want to make clear to all that the enactment of this legislation should not, despite the fierce and at times divisive rhetoric surrounding it, be understood to provide an excuse for discrimination, violence, or intimidation against any person on the basis of sexual orientation. Discrimination, violence, and intimidation for that reason, as well as others, violate the principle of equal protection under the law and have no place in American society.

NOTE: H.R. 3396, approved September 21, was assigned Public Law No. 104–199. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

## Proclamation 6921—National Historically Black Colleges and Universities Week, 1996

*September 20, 1996*

*By the President of the United States of America*

### *A Proclamation*

Since the Reconstruction period, when 24 private black colleges were founded within 10 years, our Nation's Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) have played a central role in providing access to higher education for many Americans. Growing steadily after this early burst, HBCUs fought a hard struggle for survival over many decades, ultimately proving themselves to be not only factories of learning, but also bastions of the core American ideals of freedom, diversity, and enterprise.

Today, more than 100 HBCUs throughout our country serve a unique role in educating African Americans. Although as a group they make up only 3 percent of American institutions of higher learning, they award one-third of all bachelor's degrees—and a major proportion of the graduate degrees—earned by African Americans each year. Their alumni rolls include scores of leaders in fields ranging from law to the sciences, and from the arts to medicine. Often working with limited resources, these institutions have earned a reputation for achieving ''the most with the least'' public dollars—consistently keeping tuition costs affordable, for example, or accepting higher numbers of students who need special educational or financial assistance.

Our Historically Black Colleges and Universities are an enduring beacon of hope offering thousands of our citizens a critical opportunity to achieve their full potential. HBCUs give these students not only access to a quality education, but also a supportive environment in which to learn and positive role models whose lives they can strive to emulate. In addition, these institutions con-

tribute to the pluralism of American education, giving students a broader choice. Ultimately, they also help instill and preserve the African American cultural heritage, in the process educating all Americans to the richness of the Black experience.

The future of HBCUs is as bright as their past, and they are busy developing ways to meet the challenges of a new century: special outreach initiatives designed to spread their wealth of resources into the communities that have grown up around them; cutting-edge projects in science and technology involving corporate and governmental partnerships; and international educational efforts spanning the entire globe.

They will continue at the creative forefront of American education, offering the tools and skills necessary to prepare students for today's competitive and technological society. In this coming week, let us honor the contributions—past and present—of Historically Black Colleges and Universities, and let us treasure forever the rich resource they provide to our Nation: a proud tradition of well-educated Americans, eager to make this a better world for all of us.

**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 September 22 through September 28, 1996, as National Historically Black Colleges and Universities Week. I call upon the people of the United States, including government officials, educators, and administrators, to observe this week with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities honoring America's black colleges and universities, and their graduates.

**In Witness Whereof,** I have hereunto set my hand this twentieth day of September, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-six, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-first.

**William J. Clinton**

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., September 25, 1996]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on September 26. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

## Remarks in Brandon, South Dakota

*September 20, 1996*

Give them a hand. [*Applause*] I thought they did well. Did you read somewhere that that was my favorite Beatles song? [*Laughter*] Or did you just do it on your—it was a wonderful job. Thank you very much, and thank you for playing here tonight.

Ladies and gentlemen, I am glad to be back in South Dakota. I came here three times when I was seeking the Presidency. I loved every trip. I couldn't wait to get back. And I want you to know how we came to be here tonight. We were planning our schedule a couple of weeks ago, and we were going to do this bus trip in Washington and Oregon, and I looked at the map and I looked at the schedule and I looked at the time, and they said, "You're going to be dead when you finish." I said, "I'm not going to be that tired. I want to go to South Dakota before I go back to Washington." And I'm glad to be here.

I want to thank all of those who have been here before tonight, your student, Kelly Soye, Senator Chet Jones, Rick Weiland. Thank you for running for Congress, Rick, and I hope you make it. I want to thank Sarah Sholz for that wonderful introduction of Hillary. I liked it even better than she did. [*Laughter*] It meant a lot to me, and I appreciate it.

I want to thank my longtime friend of nearly 25 years now, Senator George McGovern, for being here tonight, for his life and public service, and for his wonderful and very brave book about his beloved daughter. And I'm glad he's home in South Dakota. I'm honored to be here on the same platform with him tonight. Thank you.

I want to thank your superintendent, George Gulson, and your principal, Don Kuchel, for letting me come here. And thank you for delaying the homecoming just a little bit. We needed to stop until it quit raining anyway. [*Laughter*] I am really pleased to see all of you here. I want to say a special word of thanks to the football teams. They came out in the back, and I got to shake hands