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**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 March 1999 as Irish-American Heritage Month. I call upon all the people of the United States to observe this month with appropriate ceremonies, programs, and activities.

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

**William J. Clinton**

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 11:21 a.m., March 2, 1999]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on March 3.

## Proclamation 7170—Women's History Month, 1999

*March 1, 1999*

*By the President of the United States of America*

### *A Proclamation*

A little more than a century ago, an editorial in the *Pittsburgh Dispatch* opposing women's suffrage and criticizing women in the work force so infuriated a young reader that she wrote a letter in protest. Her articulate response prompted the newspaper's editor to offer her a job, and thus Elizabeth Cochrane—later known as Nellie Bly—began her career in journalism. A pioneer of investigative reporting, she exposed the brutal conditions in the care of the mentally ill, reported on poor working conditions in factories, and wrote of the indignities suffered by women in prison. This year, as we reflect on America's past in preparation for our celebration of the new millennium, we recognize that the talent, energy, intellect, and determination of countless women like Nellie Bly have shaped our destiny and enriched our society since our earliest days as a Nation.

From the women who organized the East India Company tea boycotts before the Boston Tea Party to Deborah Sampson, who fought as a soldier in the Revolutionary War; from Angelina and Sarah Grimké, who spoke out against slavery to Harriet Tubman, who risked her life as a conductor on the Underground Railroad; from suffragist Carrie Chapman Catt to sharecropper Fannie Lou Hamer, who faced violence and endured intimidation to become a leader of the Civil Rights movement; from environmentalist Rachel Carson, who changed our way of looking at the world, to physicist Chien-Shiung Wu, who changed our way of looking at the universe, women's history is truly America's history. That is why I was pleased to establish in July of last year the President's Commission on the Celebration of Women in American History, whose recommendations will help us to better understand and rejoice to appreciate the role and accomplishments of women.

During Women's History Month, we honor the generations of women who have served our Nation as doctors and scientists, teachers and factory workers, soldiers and secretaries, athletes and mothers. We honor the women who have worked the land, cared for children and the elderly, nurtured families and businesses, served in charitable organizations and public office. And we remember the good friends we have so recently lost—women such as Bella Abzug, Marjory Stoneman Douglas, and Florence Griffith-Joyner—whose achievements and example continue to light our lives.

But we must do more than remember. We must build on the legacy of the millions of women, whether renowned or anonymous, who have contributed so much to the strength and character of our Nation. We must ensure that women have equal access to the education and opportunities they need to excel. We must guarantee that women receive equal pay in the workplace. We must promote policies and programs—including affordable, high-quality child care—that enable working women to succeed both on the job and in their homes. And we must work to ensure that women have the comfort of knowing they can retire in security. Women who have gone before us accomplished so

much, often in the face of hardship and discrimination; we can only imagine what women will accomplish in the future if we break down the remaining barriers that prevent them from reaching their full potential.

**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 March 1999 as Women's History Month. I encourage all Americans to observe this month with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities, and to remember throughout the year the many heroic women whose many and varied contributions have enriched our lives.

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

**William J. Clinton**

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 11:21 a.m., March 2, 1999]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on March 3.

## Proclamation 7171—Save Your Vision Week, 1999

*March 1, 1999*

*By the President of the United States of America*

### *A Proclamation*

Vision is an extraordinary blessing—one that should be cherished and protected. Complex and remarkable organs, the eyes work in concert with the brain to produce vision, allowing us to experience the beauty and variety of the physical world around us.

Because blindness and vision loss are often avoidable, the maintenance of good vision must be a top health priority and an integral part of every American's overall health care routine. Preventative eye care is particularly important because there are often no warning signs or pain associated with many eye diseases, and, by the time vision loss is identified, it is frequently too late to undo the damage. Periodic dilated pupil eye examinations can reveal the early signs of eye disease and buy precious time for treatment.

It is equally important to protect our eyes from injury, another leading cause of vision loss. Each year, more than 2.4 million eye injuries occur in the United States. By using protective eyewear when working with machinery or chemicals, playing sports, or engaging in other recreational activities, we can help prevent irreparable loss of sight.

Taking measures to prevent vision loss in our children is especially important because their early development and academic achievement can suffer due to vision problems or diseases. Even before they begin school, children should undergo a complete eye examination so that poor vision or eye disorders can be appropriately treated.

As the 21st century fast approaches, our national investment in research to prevent, postpone, and treat eye diseases and disorders has produced substantial results. Laser technology, new medications, gene mapping, innovations in diagnostic techniques, and other sight-saving discoveries are improving the lives of millions of Americans. These advances in medical research, combined with preventative eye care and increased safety measures, can all work to preserve our gift of sight.

To remind our citizens of the importance of safeguarding their eyesight, the Congress, by join resolution approved December 30, 1963 (77 Stat. 629; 36 U.S.C. 169a), has authorized and requested the President to proclaim the first week in March of each year as ''Save Your Vision Week.''

**Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton,** President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim March 7 through March 13, 1999, as Save Your Vision Week. I urge all Americans to participate by making eye care and eye safety an important part of their lives and to ensure that dilated eye examinations are included in their regular health maintenance programs. I invite eye care professionals, the media, and all public and private organizations dedicated to preserving eyesight to join in activities that will raise awareness of the measures we can take to protect and sustain our vision.