

Proclamation 7309—National Safe Boating Week, 2000

May 18, 2000

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Living in a country bordered by oceans and blessed with abundant lakes and rivers, Americans have made recreational boating one of our Nation's most popular pastimes. Each year, more than 74 million Americans take to the water with family and friends to relax and enjoy the beauty of the natural world.

But each year, for too many Americans, boating ends in tragedy. Most boating-related injuries and deaths are the result of human error and poor judgment, caused, for example, by excessive speed, failure to follow safe navigation rules, and drinking or taking drugs while operating watercraft. These injuries could easily be prevented by using common sense and making safety the first priority.

Boating accidents can occur at any time—whether the water is smooth or turbulent and whether the boater is experienced or a novice. One of the best ways to make a recreational boating experience safe and enjoyable is to ensure that everyone on board always wears a life jacket. To reinforce this life-saving message, the National Safe Boating Campaign has once again selected the theme “Boat Smart from the Start! Wear Your Life Jacket!” for this year's observance. Recreational boating organizations, including the National Safe Boating Council and the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators, as well as the U.S. Coast Guard, other Federal agencies, and State and local governments, are continuing to promote safety through education by emphasizing the importance of wearing life jackets and practicing boating and water safety.

In recognition of the importance of safe boating practices, the Congress, by joint resolution approved June 4, 1958 (36 U.S.C. 131), as amended, has authorized and requested the President to proclaim annually the 7-day period ending on the last Friday

before Memorial Day as “National Safe Boating Week.”

Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim May 20 through May 26, 2000, as National Safe Boating Week. I encourage the governors of the 50 States and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and officials of other areas subject to the jurisdiction of the United States, to join in observing this occasion and to urge all Americans to use safe boating practices throughout the year.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this eighteenth day of May, in the year of our Lord two thousand, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-fourth.

William J. Clinton

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NOTE: This proclamation will be published in the *Federal Register* on May 23.

Remarks on the 50th Anniversary of Armed Forces Day in Suitland, Maryland

May 19, 2000

Thank you very much. Secretary Cohen, thank you for your kind words and your truly exemplary leadership of the Department of Defense. Secretary Slater, thank you for your presence here and the support you have given the Coast Guard. General Shelton, thank you for your lifetime of service and for your leadership of the Joint Chiefs. And Senator Glenn, I thank you for your service, your personal friendship to me, and your astonishing lifetime example. We're all looking forward to going into space in our late seventies, thanks to you. I thank the members of the Joint Chiefs and the Service Secretaries. General Jones, General Shalikashvili, thank you for being here. Ladies and gentlemen of our Armed Forces, family members, and friends.

I want to begin, if I might, by paying tribute to the men and women of our military who work in the White House, my Andrews-based Air Force One crews, my helicopter crews, my military aides, and those from