

Serving as examples to others, throughout our Nation every day, older Americans are engaging in acts of compassion. Over a half million members of the Senior Corps are volunteering their time and talents to help those in need. Retired doctors, nurses, police, and firefighters are helping communities prepare for emergencies, and countless other older Americans are bringing comfort and care to their families and neighbors. These individuals understand the importance of service, and their efforts are helping to build a more welcoming society. Many food banks, clothing distribution programs, and other social service activities of faith-based and community organizations could not operate without the senior Americans who volunteer in these efforts.

As these individuals continue to work on our behalf, our Nation is working to fulfill our obligations to older Americans by providing them with good health care and other services to enhance their lives. My Administration is coordinating with State and Area Agencies on Aging, and faith-based and community organizations to better provide essential services, such as meals, nutrition, counseling, and health screening, to our seniors. Seven million older Americans and their families are currently being served by a large network of Federal, State, tribal, local partnerships, and thousands of volunteers. The services provided by these groups make it easier for older Americans to remain in their homes, communities, and the workplace, which helps preserve their dignity and independence.

In addition, our Medicare system is our binding commitment as a caring society. When Medicare was signed into law 38 years ago, it was designed to bring the healing miracle of modern medicine to our senior citizens. We must renew our commitment to giving seniors access to the preventative medicines and new drugs that are transforming health care in America. Medicare must be available in a variety of forms, and older Americans must have the opportunity to choose the healthcare plan that best fits their needs. My Administration will continue its efforts to improve programs that support older Americans and to offer innovative options for long-term care.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, 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 May 2003 as Older Americans Month. I commend our senior citizens for their many contributions to our society. I further commend the network of Federal, State, local, and tribal organizations, service and healthcare providers, caregivers, and millions of dedicated volunteers for their daily efforts on behalf of our senior citizens. I encourage all Americans to honor their elders, to find opportunities to address their needs, and to work together to reinforce the bonds that unite families and communities. I also call upon all our citizens to publicly reaffirm our Nation's commitment to older Americans this month, and throughout the year.

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

George W. Bush

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**Proclamation 7670—Law Day,
U.S.A., 2003**

April 30, 2003

*By the President of the United States
of America*

A Proclamation

America was founded on the ideals of liberty and equality for all, and the Framers of the Constitution created three branches of the national Government to uphold these principles. The third branch, the Judicial, is responsible for administering justice fairly and impartially. On Law Day, we recognize the achievements of our Nation's legal system and our independent Judiciary in sustaining the rights and liberties we cherish.

George Washington wrote, “The administration of justice is the firmest pillar of government.” Our Judicial branch upholds the rule of law in our society and strengthens our democracy. Under the Constitution, judges are granted the solemn responsibility of providing fair and impartial resolution of criminal and civil disputes.

This year’s Law Day theme, “Independent Courts Protect Our Liberties,” focuses on one of the foundations of our constitutional system: judicial independence, provided in the Federal system by life tenure and an assured level of compensation. In order to ensure equality for all citizens and fairness in the judicial process, our judges must serve as impartial arbiters who do not have a stake in their decisions or seek to achieve a biased outcome or particular result in the cases they oversee.

Our constitutional system of separation of powers places careful limits on the powers of judges and separates the responsibilities of making laws and interpreting laws between the Legislative and Judicial branches. Independent Federal judges have the autonomy to make decisions and interpret the law unfettered by outside influences. In this way, we are assured that our laws will be interpreted justly and applied with uniformity.

Our Nation’s judges must be men and women of exemplary character, wisdom, experience, and good temperament, and have a willingness to work hard. They must be jurists who will honor the public office with which they are entrusted.

This Law Day, we recognize the vital role of independent judges in upholding justice in courts throughout our land, and we resolve to continue to support and strengthen the Judicial branch, thereby helping to preserve our rights and liberties.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, in accordance with Public Law 87–20, as amended, do hereby proclaim May 1, 2003, as Law Day, U.S.A. I call upon all the people of the United States to observe this day with appropriate ceremonies and activities. I also call upon Government officials to display the flag of the United States in support of this national observance.

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

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Remarks on the National Day of Prayer

May 1, 2003

Thanks for coming. Thanks for the warm welcome. I’m glad you’re here at the people’s house. Laura and I welcome you. We’re really pleased to have you here. I want to thank each of you for participating in the National Day of Prayer. It’s a good time to be praying. Every day is a good day to pray. [*Laughter*]

Today we recognize the many ways our country has been blessed, and we acknowledge the source of those blessings. Millions of Americans seek guidance every day in prayer to the Almighty God. I am one of them. I also know that many Americans remember Laura and me in their prayers, and we are so very, very grateful.

I want to thank General Hicks, chaplain of the entire U.S. Army, for being here today, and thank you for your service. Shirley, thank you as well for once again being the chairwoman of the National Day of Prayer. I see you brought your husband along too. [*Laughter*]

Luis, *muchas gracias*. Thank you for your beautiful prayer. Father Joe Wallroth is going to be with us in a second. I’m honored you are here, Father.

I really want to thank the Washington National Cathedral Choir of Men and Girls. It is a fabulous way to begin a morning, to walk down the corridor here and hear your beautiful voices echo throughout this magnificent house. We’re really glad you’re here, and thank you for sharing your talents.