

constitutional principles set forth by the Supreme Court in *INS v. Chadha*.

George W. Bush

The White House,
December 1, 2003.

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Proclamation 7740—World AIDS Day, 2003

December 1, 2003

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

The HIV/AIDS pandemic presents one of the greatest medical and social challenges of our time. On World AIDS Day, members of the global community come together to demonstrate our shared commitment to turning the tide against the spread of HIV/AIDS, bringing hope and healing to those who are suffering, and finding a cure.

Over the last two decades, AIDS has claimed the lives of more than 20 million people. Three million have died in the last year alone. Today, more than 40 million people are living with HIV, including nearly 30 million in Africa. Behind these staggering numbers are the names and faces of orphaned and suffering children, devastated communities, and a continent in crisis.

In my State of the Union Message to the Congress in January of this year, I announced an “Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief,” with a goal of helping millions around the world affected by HIV/AIDS, particularly those in the most afflicted nations in Africa and the Caribbean. In May, the Congress responded by passing the “United States Leadership Against HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria Act of 2003,” which I signed into law. A life-saving initiative, the Act commits \$15 billion over the next 5 years to prevent 7 million new HIV infections, treat at least 2 million people with life-extending drugs, provide care for at least 10 million people affected by AIDS, continue bilateral programs in over 75 countries, and increase support for the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis,

and Malaria. This work of mercy will help overcome fear, stigma, and discrimination and create a cycle of hope and promise that will benefit millions.

Here at home, we will spend more than \$15 billion this year to combat AIDS in America. This money will support research activities, care and treatment services, and prevention programs, including the wide availability of rapid HIV testing.

Fighting HIV/AIDS is not only a great challenge but also a moral imperative for those who believe in the value and dignity of every human life. This World AIDS Day, the United States remains committed to taking action, showing compassion, and bringing hope to those affected by HIV/AIDS around the world.

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 December 1, 2003, as World AIDS Day. I urge the Governors of the States and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, officials of the other territories subject to the jurisdiction of the United States, and the American people to join me in reaffirming our commitment to combating HIV/AIDS. I encourage all Americans to participate in appropriate commemorative programs and ceremonies in houses of worship, workplaces, and other community centers to remember those who have lost their lives to this deadly disease and to comfort and support those living with and affected by HIV/AIDS.

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

George W. Bush

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Remarks on Signing the Adoption Promotion Act of 2003

December 2, 2003

The President. Good to see you all. Thank you. Thanks. Please be seated. Hi, Mary. Thank you, Jim. Thanks for coming. Thank you all for coming. Gosh, we got a lot of great families with us today. We're really proud you all are here. I want to thank you for coming to the Roosevelt Room. I'm delighted you're here.

The adoption of a boy or a girl is a moment of joy for a family, and it's an act of great generosity. When parents share their homes and all they have with a child, the child they adopt and love as their own, all their lives are transformed forever. Isn't that right?

Diana Martin. Yes.

Christopher Martin. Yes. [Laughter]

The President. In every young life, there is a great need to belong. For the sake of our children, this Nation has a responsibility to encourage adoption of children at all ages, from infants to adolescents. The legislation I'm about to sign today sends a clear message: Our society is building a culture that values every life, and our Government strongly supports adoption.

I appreciate Deputy Secretary Claude Allen from the Department of Health and Human Services for joining us. I want to thank three Members of the Congress who have been instrumental in this legislation, and I appreciate their good, hard work. Senator Mary Landrieu of the great State of Louisiana is with us, Jim Oberstar of Minnesota, and Dave Camp of Michigan. Thank you all for coming. I appreciate you taking time to come to herald this important piece of legislation. I'm honored you all are here.

Bruce Willis is not with us, but I do want to thank him for being the national spokesperson on foster care and adoption. His message is helpful. It's important to help spread the word about the joys of adoption, and Bruce has been mighty helpful in doing just that.

I want to thank the parents of adoptive children who are with us today. The Martin family, the Hendrix family are with us, the Morris family and the Schwarzwald family. I'm honored you all are here. I want to thank

you for giving me a chance and the Members of Congress a chance, after the bill signing, to personally thank you for showing America the generosity of spirit that makes our country such a wonderful place. We're really glad you're here.

Thanks to the Congress and thanks to the groups that work on behalf of foster children and to moms and dads across America, these last few years have brought real progress in the cause of adoption. We're making progress here in America.

Six years ago, Congress provided new incentives to the States to promote foster care adoptions, and those incentives have worked. I suspect these Members of Congress worked on that important legislation. In just 5 years, from 1998 to 2002, the States placed more than 230,000 children in adoptive homes—about the same number that had been adopted in the previous 10 years. We're making some progress here in America.

In the same period, 33 States and the District of Columbia have at least doubled foster care adoptions. To further promote adoption, we increased the adoption tax credit in 2001 from \$5,000 to \$10,000. I want to thank the Members for working on that important piece of legislation. I hope it helps families.

In 2002, my administration created a new web site called AdoptUSKids.org, which has already helped to join nearly 2,000 children with adoptive parents. In other words, if you want to be a part of this movement of love in America, go to the web site, and the web site will help you understand how best to become an adoptive parent. Many more still await their chance and their home, and we are determined to help all children in America.

Today in America, more 126,000 foster children still need an adoptive family. And nearly half of these children are past the age of 9. Foster parents bring help and kindness at a crucial point in a child's life, yet foster care is by nature temporary. And the aim of the system and the desire of every child is a permanent home.

The bill I sign this morning will help bring that opportunity to many more children of all ages. The Adoption Promotion Act of 2003 will continue all the current incentives that have created new momentum for the