
Presidential Documents

Proclamation 7055 of November 22, 1997

National Family Caregivers Week, 1997

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

During this season of thanksgiving, when we reflect on the many blessings that have been bestowed on us as individuals and as a Nation, we are especially grateful for the love of our families and friends. One of the most profound ways in which that love is expressed is through the generous support provided by caregivers to those who need help if they are to remain in their homes and communities.

Caregivers reflect family and community life at its best. Thanks to their efforts, Americans with disabilities and a growing number of elderly Americans are able to stay in familiar surroundings and to maintain their dignity and independence. Caregivers not only enhance the quality of life for those they serve, but also greatly reduce the demands on the formal system of caregiving services in our Nation.

The statistics describing caregivers in America today tell an extraordinary story of generosity and compassion. Nearly one in four households is involved in caring for a relative or other loved one in need, providing a range of assistance from personal care to household help to transportation. Thirty percent of caregivers are caring for two or more people, and 64 percent hold down jobs while providing such care. Caregivers share not only their time, but also their resources, spending some \$2 billion a month of their own assets for groceries, medicine, and other aid.

There is another side to caregiving in America today. Many older relatives now take care of children whose parents, for whatever reason, are no longer able to provide that care themselves. These generous men and women, who in many cases have already raised families and are looking forward to pursuing their own interests in retirement, embrace the challenges of parenting a new generation of young people. They give millions of our most vulnerable youth the opportunity to grow up in stable, loving homes.

These everyday heroes among us deserve our lasting gratitude and respect. This week, as we honor the many contributions that family caregivers make to the quality of our national life, let us resolve to work through our community, religious, social, business, and other organizations to offer programs and services that will provide caregivers the support and encouragement they need to carry out their vital responsibilities.

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 November 23 through November 29, 1997, as National Family Caregivers Week. I call upon Government officials, businesses, communities, educators, volunteers, and all the people of the United States to acknowledge the invaluable efforts of caregivers this week and throughout the year.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-second day of November, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-second.

William Clinton

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