Commemorative Observances:  
A Chronological List

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Summary

Historically, national commemorative observances were often recommended by Congress through the legislative process. This practice was for the most part discontinued by the House of Representatives in January 1995, although the Senate continues to issue sense of the Senate resolutions recommending the establishment of commemoratives. It has now become standard practice for special observances to be designated by a proclamation issued by the President. A recent noteworthy departure from current congressional policy is P.L. 107-89, which designates September 11 as Patriot Day and calls upon the President to issue an annual proclamation calling on the American people to commemorate Patriot Day. This report is a chronological list of these proclamations for 2002 and 2003, indicating the proclamation number and its Federal Register citation. This report will be updated periodically during the year.
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Historically, national commemorative observances were often recommended by Congress through the legislative process. This practice was for the most part discontinued by the House of Representatives in January 1995, although the Senate continues to issue sense of the Senate resolutions recommending the establishment of commemoratives.

The President has always had the authority to declare by proclamation any commemorative event or national observance. It has now become standard practice for special observances to be designated by a proclamation issued by the President. A recent noteworthy departure from current congressional policy is P.L. 107-89, which designates September 11 as Patriot Day and calls upon the President to issue an annual proclamation calling upon the American people to commemorate Patriot Day. Generally these observances are limited to a one-time celebration only, on a particular day, week, or month of a particular year.

The following is a chronological list of these proclamations for 2002 and 2003, indicating the proclamation number and its Federal Register (FR) citation.

Except for the perpetual commemoratives indicated in italics below, with their citations to the U.S. Code (USC), these proclamations (Proc.) must be reissued each year. Most are issued only shortly before the observance of the event. For this reason, we are unable to provide a complete advance calendar indicating these days. We are providing the 2002 list as an indication of the observances that might well be designated again in 2003.

2002

Decade

National Bone and Joint Decade, 2002-2011 Proc. 7533, 67 FR 13703

January

National Mentoring Month Proc. 7519, 67 FR 3577

16 Religious Freedom Day Proc. 7517, 67 FR 2787

20 National Sanctity of Human Life Day Proc. 7520, 67 FR 3579
February

*American Heart Month* 36 USC 169b
February each year Proc. 7521, 67 FR 5431

National African American History Month Proc. 7522, 67 FR 5433

3-9 National Consumer Protection Week Proc. 7523, 67 FR 5919

March

American Red Cross Month Proc. 7525, 67 FR 10311

Irish-American Heritage Month Proc. 7526, 67 FR 10313

Women’s History Month Proc. 7530, 67 FR 10825

National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month Proc. 7527, 67 FR 10315

3-9 *Save Your Vision Week* 36 USC 169a
Proc. 7528, 67 FR 10317

16 West Point Bicentennial Day Proc. 7531, 67 FR 11381

17-23 *National Poison Prevention Week* 36 USC 165
Third week of March each year Proc. 7532, 67 FR 12441

24 Education and Sharing Day Proc. 7534, 67 FR 13703

25 Greek Independence Day Proc. 7537, 67 FR 15093

April

*Cancer Control Month* 36 USC 150
April each year Proc. 7536, 67 FR 17599

National Child Abuse Prevention Month Proc. 7537, 67 FR 17601

9 National Former Prisoner of War Proc. 7358, 67 FR 17905

(Drug Abuse Resistance Education)

14 Pan American Day Proc. 7540, 67 FR 19097

14-21 Jewish Heritage Week Proc. 7541, 67 FR 19099

14-20 Pan-American Week Proc. 7540, 67 FR 19097

21-27 National Crime Victims’ Rights Week Proc. 7543, 67 FR 19635

21-27 National Organ and Tissue Donor Awareness Week Proc. 7544, 67 FR 20005

21-27 National Volunteer Week Proc. 7545, 67 FR 20007
May

**Asian/Pacific-American Heritage Month**
May each year
Proc. 7550, 67 FR 30311

**Older Americans Month**
Proc. 7551, 67 FR 30313

**Law Day**
May 1 each year
Proc. 7548, 67 FR 30307

**Loyalty Day**
May 1 each year
Proc. 7549, 67 FR 30309

**National Day of Prayer**
First Thursday of May each year
Proc. 7547, 67 FR 21559

**National Tourism Week**
Proc. 7556, 67 FR 31107

**Small Business Week**
Proc. 7555, 67 FR 31105

**Mother’s Day**
Second Sunday in May each year
Proc. 7557, 67 FR 34583

**National Transportation Week**
Week in which National Defense Transportation Day falls each year
Proc. 7559, 67 FR 34587

**Police Week**
Week in which Peace Officer Memorial Day falls each year
Proc. 7558, 67 FR 34585

**Peace Officer Memorial Day**
May 15 each year
Proc. 7558, 67 FR 34585

**National Defense Transportation Day**
Third Friday in May each year
Proc. 7559, 67 FR 34587

**Armed Forces Day**
Third Saturday in May each year
Proc. 7562, 67 FR 35707

**National Safe Boating Week**
Seven-day period prior to the Memorial Day weekend each year
Proc. 7563, 67 FR 35891

**National Hurricane Awareness Week**
Proc. 7560, 67 FR 34815

**World Trade Week**
Proc. 7564, 67 FR 35893

**National Maritime Day**
May 22 each year
Proc. 7565, 67 FR 36495

**National Missing Children’s Day**
Proc. 7566, 67 FR 36497
27 Prayer for Peace Memorial Day
Memorial Day each year
36 USC 169g
Proc. 7567, 67 FR 36499

June

Black Music Month
National Homeownership Month
Proc. 7568, 67 FR 38583
Proc. 7570, 67 FR 39241

2-8 National Fishing and Boating Week
67 FR 38585

9 National Child’s Day
Proc. 7571, 67 FR 39595

9-15 Great Outdoors Week
Proc. 7572, 67 FR 40137

14 Flag Day
June 14 each year
36 USC 157
Proc. 7573, 67 FR 40139

9-15 National Flag Week
Week in which June 14 occurs each year
36 USC 157a
Proc. 7573, 67 FR 40139

16 Father’s Day
Third Sunday in June each year
36 USC 142a
Proc. 7574, 67 FR 42177

July

14-20 Captive Nations Week
Third Week in July each year
P.L. 86-90
Proc. 7577, 67 FR 47677

26 Anniversary of the Americans with
Disabilities Act
Proc. 7579, 67 FR 49555

27 National Korean War Veterans Armistice Day
July 27 each year until 2003
36 USC 169m
Proc. 7578, 67 FR 49551

28 Parents’ Day
Fourth Sunday of July each year
36 USC 169m
Proc. 7580, 67 FR 49577

August

16 National Airborne Day
Proc. 7582, 67 FR 53723

18-24 National Health Center Week
Proc. 7583, 67 FR 53873

26 Women’s Equality Day
Proc. 7584, 67 FR 55317

September

National Alcohol and Drug Addiction
Recovery Month
Proc. 7589, 67 FR 57123
### National Hispanic Heritage Month
September 15 through October 15 each year

**National Ovarian Cancer Month**

6-8 **National Days of Prayer and Remembrance**

11 **Patriot Day**
September 11 each year

15-21 **National Farm Safety and Health Week**

11-17 **Citizenship Day**
September 17 each year

17-23 **Constitution Week**
Week of September 17-23 each year

20 **National POW/MIA Recognition Day**

29 **Gold Star Mother’s Day**
Last Sunday in September each year

### October

**National Breast Cancer Awareness Month**

36 USC 159f

**National Disability Employment Awareness Month**
October each year

36 USC 155

**National Domestic Violence Awareness Month**

6 **German-American Day**

6-12 **Fire Prevention Week**

7 **Child Health Day**
First Monday in October each year

9 **Leif Erikson Day**
October 9 each year

11 **General Pulaski Memorial Day**

13-19 **National Cystic Fibrosis Awareness Week**

13-19 **National School Lunch Week**
Week beginning on the second Sunday in October

15 **White Cane Safety Day**
October 15 each year

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Proc. 7591, 67 FR 58955
Proc. 7587, 67 FR 56745
Proc. 7588, 67 FR 56893
Proc. 7590, 67 FR 57125
Proc. 7592, 67 FR 58957
Proc. 7593, 67 FR 58959
36 USC 153
36 USC 159
Proc. 7595, 67 FR 60099
Proc. 7598, 67 FR 62159
Proc. 7599, 67 FR 62165
Proc. 7600, 67 FR 62167
Proc. 7601, 67 FR 62169
Proc. 7604, 67 FR 62867
Proc. 7602, 67 FR 63863
36 USC 143
67 FR 62865
Proc. 7605, 67 FR 63527
Proc. 7607, 67 FR 64025
Proc. 7608, 67 FR 64027
Proc. 7609, 67 FR 64029
Proc. 7610, 67 FR 64031
18 Year of Clean Water
Year beginning October 18, 2002, in commemoration of the anniversary of the Clean Water Act
Proc. 7611, 67 FR 64787

20-26 National Character Counts Week
Proc. 7612, 67 FR 65281

20-26 National Forest Products Week
Week beginning on the third Sunday in October each year
Proc. 7613, 67 FR 65283

24 United Nations Day
Proc. 7614, 67 FR 65869

November

National Adoption Month
Proc. 7629, 67 FR 67771

National American Indian Heritage Month
Proc. 7620, 67 FR 67773

National Alzheimer’s Disease Awareness Month
Proc. 7617, 67 FR 67293

National Diabetes Month
Proc. 7618, 67 FR67295

National Family Caregivers Month
Proc. 7615, 67 FR 67087

National Hospice Month
Proc. 7621, 67 FR 67775

1 World AIDS Day
Proc. 7631, 67 FR 72089

6 West Wing Centennial Day
Proc. 7622, 67 FR 69017

9 World Freedom Day
Proc. 7625, 67 FR 69117

10-16 National Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve Week
Proc. 7624, 67 FR 68921

15 America Recycles Day
Proc. 7627, 67 FR 69657

22-28 National Farm-City Week
Proc. 7629, 67 FR 70833

24-30 National Family Week
Proc. 7360, 67 FR 71067

December

7 National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day
December 7 each year
36 USC 169

17 Wright Brothers Day
December 17 each year
36 USC 169
January

February

*American Heart Month*  
February each year

March

2-8 *Save Your Vision Week*  
First week of March each year

16-22 *National Poison Prevention Week*  
Third week of March each year

April

*Cancer Control Month*  
April each year

May

*Asian/Pacific-American Heritage Month*  
May each year

1 *Law Day*  
May 1 each year

1 *Loyalty Day*  
May 1 each year

1 *National Day of Prayer*  
First Thursday of May each year

11 *Mother’s Day*  
Second Sunday in May each year

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Week in which Peace Officer Memorial Day falls each year

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Week in which National Defense Transportation Day falls each year

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Third Saturday in May each Year

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22 National Maritime Day
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Week in which June 14 occurs each year

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June 14 each year

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Third Sunday in June each year

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Third week in July each year

27 National Korean War Veterans Armistice Day
July 27 each year until 2003

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September

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September 15 through October 15 each year

11 Patriot Day
September 11 each year

17 Citizenship Day
September 17 each year
17-23 Constitution Week
Week beginning September 17 and ending September 23 each year

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Last Sunday in September each year

October

National Disability Employment Awareness Month
October each year

6 Child Health Day
First Monday in October each year

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October 9 each year

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December

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December 7 each year

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December 17 each year