Commemorative Observances: A Chronological List

Updated September 7, 2004

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Commemorative Observances:
A Chronological List

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 2003 and 2004, indicating the proclamation number and its Federal Register citation. This report will be updated periodically during the year.
Commemorative Observances:  
A Chronological List

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 2003 and 2004, 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 (U.S.C.), 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 2003 list as an indication of the observances that might well be designated again in 2004.

2003

Decade

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

January

National Mentoring Month
Proc. 7636, 68 FR 995

13  Centennial of Korean Immigration to the United States
Proc. 7368, 68 FR 2173

16  National Religious Freedom Day
Proc. 7640, 68 FR 2869
19 National Sanctity of Human Life Day  Proc. 7639, 68 FR 2409

February

American Heart Month  36 U.S.C. 101
February each year  Proc. 7644, 68 FR 6055
National African American History Month  Proc. 7645, 68 FR 6057
2-8 National Consumer Protection Week  Proc. 7643, 68 FR 4887

March

American Red Cross Month  Proc. 7648, 68 FR 10641
Irish-American Heritage Month  Proc. 7649, 68 FR 10643
National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month  Proc. 7650, 68 FR 10645
Women’s History Month  Proc. 7651, 68 FR 10647
2-8 Save Your Vision Week  36 U.S.C. 138
First week of March each year  Proc. 7652, 68 FR 10649
16-22 National Poison Prevention Week  36 U.S.C. 130
Third week of March each year  Proc. 7653, 68 FR 13217
25 Greek Independence Day  Proc. 7654, 68 FR 13805

April

Cancer Control Month  36 U.S.C. 103
April each year  Proc. 7655, 68 FR 14887
National Child Abuse Prevention Month  Proc. 1656, 68 FR 15651
National Donate Life Month  Proc. 7658, 68 FR 16403
National Fair Housing Month  Proc. 7664, 68 FR 19135
6-12 National Crime Victims’ Rights Week  Proc. 7569, 68 FR 17253
9 National Former Prisoner of War Recognition Day  Proc. 7660, 68 FR 17873
(Drug Abuse Resistance Education)
13-19 Pan American Week  Proc. 7663, 68 FR 18831
14 Pan American Day  Proc. 7663, 68 FR 18831
21-27 National Park Week
Proc. 7665, 68 FR 19929

27-5/3 National Charter School Week
Proc. 7666, 68 FR 23021

May

Asian/Pacific-American Heritage Month
May each year
36 U.S.C. 102
Proc. 7668, 68 FR 23821

Older Americans Month
Proc. 7669, 68 FR 23823

1 Law Day
May 1 each year
36 U.S.C. 113
Proc. 7670, 68 FR 23825

1 Loyalty Day
May 1 each year
36 U.S.C. 115
Proc. 7671, 68 FR 23827

1 National Day of Prayer
First Thursday of May each year
36 U.S.C. 119
Proc. 7672, 68 FR 23829

1-11 Jewish Heritage Week
Proc. 7673, 68 FR 24333

11 Mother’s Day
Second Sunday in May each year
36 U.S.C. 117
Proc. 7674, 68 FR 25277

11-17 Police Week
Week in which Peace Officer Memorial Day falls each year
36 U.S.C. 137
Proc. 7675, 68 FR 26195

11-17 National Transportation Week
Week in which National Defense Transportation Day falls each year
36 U.S.C. 133
Proc. 7676, 68 FR 26197

15 Peace Officer Memorial Day
May 15 each year
36 U.S.C. 136
Proc. 7675, 68 FR 26195

16 National Defense Transportation Day
Third Friday in May each year
36 U.S.C. 133
Proc. 7676, 68 FR 26197

17-23 National Safe Boating Week
Seven-day period prior to the Memorial Day weekend each year
36 U.S.C. 131
Proc. 7677, 68 FR 26199

18-24 National Hurricane Awareness Week
Proc. 7678, 68 FR 27427

18-24 World Trade Week
Proc. 7679, 68 FR 27889

22 National Maritime Day
May 22 each year
36 U.S.C. 128
Proc. 7689, 68 FR 28687

25 National Missing Children’s Day
Proc. 7682, 68 FR 31937

26 National Moment of Remembrance Memorial Day each year
36 U.S.C. 116
Proc. 7681, 68 FR 31935

26 Prayer for Peace Memorial Day
Memorial Day each year
36 U.S.C. 116
Proc. 7681, 68 FR 31935
June

Black Music Month
1 National Child’s Day
National Homeownership Month
8-14 National Flag Week
Week in which June 14 occurs each year
14 Flag Day
June 14 each year
15 Father’s Day
Third Sunday in June each year

July

1 30th Anniversary of the All-Volunteer Force
20-26 Captive Nations Week
Third week in July each year
27 National Korean War Veterans Armistice Day
July 27 each year until 2003
27 Parents’ Day
Fourth Sunday of July each year

August

26 Women’s Equality Day

September

National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month
National Hispanic Heritage Month
September 15 through October 15 each year
National Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month
National Prostate Cancer Awareness Month
11 Patriot Day
September 11 each year
14-20 National Historically Black Colleges and Universities Week
Proc. 7703, 68 FR 54321

14-20 Small Business Week
Proc. 7704, 68 FR 54323

17 Citizenship Day
September 17 each year
Proc. 7705, 68 FR 54977

17-23 Constitution Week
Week beginning September 17 and ending September 23 each year
Proc. 7705, 68 FR 54977

17-23 National POW/MIA Recognition Day
Proc. 7707, 68 FR 55259

21-27 National Farm Safety and Health Week
Proc. 7708, 68 FR 56511

28 Gold Star Mother’s Day
Last Sunday in September each year
Proc. 7709, 68 FR 56513

October

National Breast Cancer Awareness Month
Proc. 7711, 68 FR 58251

National Disability Employment Awareness Month
October each year
36 U.S.C. 121
Proc. 7712, 68 FR 58253

National Domestic Violence Awareness Month
Proc. 7717, 68 FR 59079

5-11 Fire Prevention Week
Proc. 7713, 68 FR 58255

6 Child Health Day
First Monday in October each year
36 U.S.C. 105
Proc. 7716, 68 FR 58573

6 German-American Day
Proc. 7715, 68 FR 58259

9 Leif Erikson Day
October 9 each year
36 U.S.C. 114
Proc. 7718, 68 FR 59305

11 General Pulaski Memorial Day
Proc. 7721, 68 FR 59517

12-18 Marriage Protection Week
Proc. 7714, 68 FR 58257

12-18 National School Lunch Week
Week beginning on the second Sunday in October each year
36 U.S.C. 132
Proc. 7719, 68 FR 59513

15 White Cane Safety Day
October 15 each year
36 U.S.C. 142
Proc. 7722, 68 FR 59853

16-11/1 Protection From Pornography Week
Proc. 7725, 68 FR 61603
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19-25</td>
<td>National Character Counts Week</td>
<td>Proc. 7724, 68 FR 60615</td>
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<td>Week beginning on the third Sunday of October each year</td>
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<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>United Nations Day</td>
<td>Proc. 7726, 68 FR 61605</td>
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**November**

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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>National Adoption Month</td>
<td>Proc. 7731, 68 FR 64483</td>
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<td></td>
<td>National Alzheimer’s Disease Awareness Month</td>
<td>Proc. 7728, 68 FR 62503</td>
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<td>National American Indian Heritage Month</td>
<td>Proc. 7735, 68 FR 65153</td>
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<td>National Family Caregivers Month</td>
<td>Proc. 7730, 68 FR 62507</td>
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<td>National Diabetes Month</td>
<td>Proc. 7729, 68 FR 62505</td>
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<td>National Hospice Month</td>
<td>Proc. 7727, 68 FR 62351</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>World Freedom Day</td>
<td>Proc. 7732, 68 FR 64485</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>America Recycles Day</td>
<td>Proc. 7734, 68 FR 64977</td>
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<td>16-22</td>
<td>National Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve Week</td>
<td>Proc. 7736, 68 FR 65155</td>
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<td>21-27</td>
<td>National Farm-City Week</td>
<td>Proc. 7737, 68 FR 65627</td>
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<tr>
<td>23-29</td>
<td>National Family Week</td>
<td>Proc. 7739, 68 FR 66319</td>
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**December**

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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>National Drunk and Drugged Driving Prevention Month</td>
<td>Proc. 7743, 68 FR 69293</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>World AIDS Day</td>
<td>Proc. 7740, 68 FR 67787</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td><strong>National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day</strong></td>
<td>36 U.S.C. 129</td>
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<td>December 7 each year</td>
<td>Proc. 7742, 68 FR 68999</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Human Rights Day</td>
<td>Proc. 7744, 68 FR 69939</td>
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<td>10-16</td>
<td>Human Rights Week</td>
<td>Proc. 7744, 68 FR 69939</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>Bill of Rights Day</td>
<td>Proc. 7744, 68 FR 69939</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td><strong>Wright Brothers Day</strong></td>
<td>36 U.S.C. 143</td>
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<td>December 17 each year</td>
<td>Proc. 7745, 68 FR 74463</td>
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2004

January

National Mentoring Month

16 Religious Freedom Day Proc. 7753, 69 FR 2993

18 National Sanctity of Human Life Day Proc. 7752, 69 FR 2821

February

*American Heart Month*
February each year

36 U.S.C. 101

Proc. 7754, 69 FR 5457

National African American History Month Proc. 7756, 69 FR 5903

1-7 National Consumer Protection Week Proc. 7755, 69 FR 5677

March

American Red Cross Month Proc. 7759, 69 FR 10593

Irish-American Heritage Month Proc. 7760, 69 FR 11483

Women’s History Month Proc. 7761, 69 FR 11485

1-6 *Save Your Vision Week*
First week of March each year

36 U.S.C. 138

Proc. 7762, 69 FR 11487

14-20 *National Poison Prevention Week*
Third week of March each year

36 U.S.C. 130

Proc. 7763, 69 FR 13707

25 Greek Independence Day Proc. 7764, 69 FR 16543

April

*Cancer Control Month*
April each year

36 U.S.C. 103

Proc. 7765, 69 FR 18465

National Child Abuse Prevention Month Proc. 7766, 69 FR 18467

National Donate Life Month Proc. 7769, 69 FR 19309


8 National D.A.R.E. Day (Drug Abuse Resistance Education)

Proc. 7768, 69 FR 19077

9 National Former Prisoner of War Recognition Day Proc. 7770, 69 FR 19751

11-17 Pan American Day Proc. 7771, 69 FR 20537
14 Pan American Week  Proc. 7771, 69 FR 20537
18-24 National Crime Victims’ Rights Week  Proc. 7774, 69 FR 21687
18-24 National Volunteer Week  Proc. 7773, 69 FR 21685
18-25 National Park Week  Proc. 7772, 69 FR 21683
25-5/1 Jewish Heritage Week  Proc. 7775, 69 FR 23085

May

Asian/Pacific-American Heritage Month  36 U.S.C. 102
May each year  Proc. 7781, 69 FR 26467
Older Americans Month  Proc. 7776, 69 FR 25283
National Physical Fitness and Sports Month  Proc. 7782, 69 FR 26469

1 Law Day  36 U.S.C. 113
May 1 each year  Proc. 7778, 69 FR 25287

1 Loyalty Day  36 U.S.C. 115
May 1 each year  Proc. 7779, 69 FR 25289

6 National Day of Prayer  36 U.S.C. 119
First Thursday of May each year  Proc. 7780, 69 FR 25291

9 Mother’s Day  36 U.S.C. 117
Second Sunday in May each year  Proc. 7783, 69 FR 26471

9-15 Police Week  36 U.S.C. 137
Week in which Peace Officer Memorial Day falls each year  Proc. 7784, 69 FR 26473

15 Peace Officers Memorial Day  36 U.S.C. 136
May 15 each year  Proc. 7784, 69 FR 26473

16-22 National Transportation Week  36 U.S.C. 133
Week in which National Defense Transportation Day falls each year  Proc. 7785, 69 FR 29031

16-22 Small Business Week  Proc. 7787, 69 FR 29035
16-22 National Hurricane Preparedness Week  Proc. 7786, 69 FR 29033

21 National Defense Transportation Day  36 U.S.C. 120
Third Friday in May each year  Proc. 7785, 69 FR 29031

22 National Maritime Day  36 U.S.C. 128
May 22 each year  Proc. 7789, 69 FR 29845

24-30 National Safe Boating Week  36 U.S.C. 131
Seven-day period prior to the Memorial Day weekend each year  Proc. 7790, 69 FR 29847
31 National Moment of Remembrance 36 U.S.C. 116
Memorial Day each year 9981, 69 FR 30813

31 Prayer for Peace Memorial Day 36 U.S.C. 116
Memorial Day each year Proc. 7791, 69 FR 30813

June

Black Music Month Proc. 7798, 69 FR 35503
Great Outdoors Month Proc. 7795, 69 FR 32427

6 National Child’s Day Proc. 7793, 69 FR 32241
6 D-Day National Remembrance Day Proc. 7792, 69 FR 32239

14 Flag Day 36 U.S.C. 110
June 14 each year Proc. 7796, 69 FR 33831

13-19 National Flag Week 36 U.S.C. 122
Week in which June 14 occurs each year Proc. 7796, 69 FR 33831

20 Father’s Day 36 U.S.C. 109
Third Sunday in June each year Proc. 7797, 69 FR 35227


July

18-24 Captive Nations Week P.L. 86-90
Third Week in July each year Proc. 7802, 69 FR 43727

Fourth Sunday of July each year Proc. 7803, 69 FR 46049

26 Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act Proc. 7804, 69 FR 46051

August

16 National Airborne Day Proc. 7805, 69 FR 51353

26 Women’s Equality Day Proc. 7806, 69 FR 52987

September

National Hispanic Heritage Month 36 U.S.C. 126
September 15 through October 15 each year

11 Patriot Day 36 U.S.C. 144
September 11 each year
17  Citizenship Day  
September 17 each year  
36 U.S.C. 106

17-23  Constitution Week  
Week of September 17-23 each year  
36 U.S.C. 108

26  Gold Star Mother’s Day  
Last Sunday in September each year  
36 U.S.C. 111

October

National Disability Employment Awareness Month  
October each year  
36 U.S.C. 121

4  Child Health Day  
First Monday in October each year  
36 U.S.C. 105

9  Leif Erikson Day  
October 9 each year  
36 U.S.C. 114

10-16  National School Lunch Week  
Week beginning on the second Sunday in October  
36 U.S.C. 132

15  White Cane Safety Day  
October 15 each year  
36 U.S.C. 142

17-23  National Forest Products Week  
Week beginning on the third Sunday in October each year  
36 U.S.C. 123

November

December

7  National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day  
December 7 each year  
36 U.S.C. 129

17  Wright Brothers Day  
December 17 each year  
36 U.S.C. 143