Proclamations Proc. 7165

through February 6, 1999, as National Consumer Protection Week. I call
upon government officials, industry leaders, consumer advocates, and the
American people to participate in programs that foster credit literacy and
raise public awareness about the dangers of credit fraud and other decep-
tive and fraudulent practices.

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

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Proclamation 7165 of February 1, 1999

National African American History Month, 1999

By the President of the United States of America
A Proclamation

The story of African Americans is one of strength, suffering, courage, and
triunmp. Arriving on these shores more than 350 years ago, African Ameri-
cans have been a central element of our national identity, and their long
journey from the horrors of slavery and oppression through the struggle for
equality and justice informs our national experience. By observing African
American History Month each year, we not only remember the tragic errors
of our past, but also celebrate the achievements of African Americans and
the promise they hold for our future as one America.

This year's theme, “The Legacy of African American Leadership for the
Present and the Future,” is a recognition that we can draw strength and
inspiration to face our challenges from the vision, voices, character, and ac-
complishments of the many extraordinary African Americans who have
gone before us. These gifted men and women, from every walk of life and
every field of endeavor, were shaped but not defeated by their experience
of racism, and their response was to move our Nation closer to our ideals
of freedom, justice, and equality.

We remember Frederick Douglass and Sojourner Truth, whose powerful
firsthand accounts of their lives as slaves and the moral strength of their
argument helped create the momentum that brought an end to slavery in
America. In our own century, we all have benefited from the skills, deter-
mination, and indefatigable spirit of such African American leaders as
Booker T. Washington, W.E.B. Du Bois, A. Philip Randolph, Ella Baker,
Thurgood Marshall, Medgar Evers, and Martin Luther King, Jr. Whether or-
ganizing peaceful demonstrations, creating educational and economic op-
opportunities, fighting Jim Crow laws in the courts, or conducting peaceful
protests, they awakened the conscience of our Nation and won signal vic-
tories for justice and human dignity. We recall the courage of the Little
Rock Nine, who opened the doors of American education for so many other
deserving young people. We remember the strength of Rosa Parks, who
stood up for civil rights by sitting down where she belonged. We continue
to draw inspiration from the leadership of Dorothy Height, who has done
so much to strengthen families and communities not only in our own Na-
tion, but also around the world.

These and so many other African American leaders have enriched our na-
tional life and shaped our national character. They have challenged us to
recognize that America’s racial, cultural, and ethnic diversity will be
among our greatest strengths in the 21st century.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United
States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitu-
tion and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim February 1999 as
National African American History Month. I call upon public officials, edu-
cators, librarians, and all the people of the United States to observe this
month with appropriate ceremonies, activities, and programs that raise
awareness and appreciation of African American history.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this first day of Feb-
ruary, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-nine, and of
the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and
twenty-third.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Proclamation 7166 of February 3, 1999

American Heart Month, 1999

By the President of the United States of America
A Proclamation

Thanks to the dedicated efforts of scientists and researchers and the strong
support of the American public, today we stand at the threshold of a new
frontier in the prevention and treatment of heart disease. And in coming
years, Americans will reap even greater benefits from our ongoing commit-
ment to heart research.

Already, research has profoundly altered scientists’ understanding of heart
disease, revealing that the likelihood of heart disease is increased by risk
factors such as smoking, high blood pressure, high blood cholesterol, diabe-
tes, obesity, physical inactivity, and a family history of early heart disease.
Armed with this knowledge, millions of Americans have been able to take
steps to reduce their risk of illness. Thanks to scientific discoveries, those
already afflicted with heart disease now have access to lifesaving therapies
and procedures such as clot-dissolving drugs, cardiopulmonary resuscita-
tion, defibrillation, and balloon angioplasty.

Even greater advances lie ahead. Fields on the verge of delivering major in-
novations include molecular genetics, gene therapy, biotechnology, immu-
nology, and epidemiology. The next breakthroughs will include better
noninvasive diagnostic tools that can help physicians examine the heart
and blood vessels without surgery; an implantable mechanical device that
can restore heart function to those suffering heart failure; and a drug that
can promote the growth of new blood vessels to body tissues and organs
with poor circulation.