

**Proclamation 8365 of April 24, 2009****National Crime Victims' Rights Week, 2009**

*By the President of the United States of America  
A Proclamation*

From violence in our neighborhoods to credit card fraud on the Internet, Americans fall victim to countless crimes every day. Our Nation has no higher responsibility than protecting the safety of our families. During National Crime Victims' Rights Week, we honor crime victims by pledging to fight crime wherever it exists.

This commitment begins by supporting the men and women working every day to reduce crime and assist crime victims. Often placing themselves in harm's way and sacrificing personal interests, these individuals are the backbone of the extensive efforts to protect Americans from crime. They have demonstrated a commitment to serve others, and their dedication is vital to implementing a successful strategy for crime reduction and victim assistance.

Crime victims have benefited from the Victims of Crime Act of 1984 (Public Law 98-473), one of the most significant achievements in crime victim assistance. This law created an innovative method for using fines and penalties from Federal criminals to fund services for victims. This Crime Victims Fund has already helped millions of victims across the country access basic assistance and financial compensation. This year marks the 25th anniversary of the bill's bipartisan passage.

An effective approach to fighting crime must include programs that make sense and work. To that end, my Administration is building on past achievements to address the range of crimes that Americans may encounter. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, which I signed in February, helps State and local law enforcement personnel perform critical work by providing \$2 billion through the Edward Byrne Justice Assistance Grant Program.

A smart crime reduction strategy must also incorporate outreach to those who have paid their debt to society and have become responsible and contributing members of their communities. Prisoner reentry programs have been tested and proven effective. Through a number of supportive services, including substance abuse and mental health counseling, prison-to-work incentives, job training, and transitional assistance, reentry programs help reduce crime recidivism and keep families safer. By utilizing common-sense and proven methods, we can both reduce crime and serve crime victims.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, BARACK OBAMA, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim April 26 through May 2, 2009, as National Crime Victims' Rights Week. I call upon all Americans to observe this week by participating in events that raise awareness of victims' rights and services and by volunteering to serve victims in their time of need.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-fourth day of April, in the year of our Lord two thousand nine, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-third.

BARACK OBAMA

**Proclamation 8366 of April 28, 2009**

**National Equal Pay Day, 2009**

*By the President of the United States of America  
A Proclamation*

Harriet Beecher Stowe helped galvanize the abolitionist movement with her groundbreaking literature. Frances Perkins advised President Franklin Delano Roosevelt and led the Department of Labor during one of its most challenging periods in history. Barbara McClintock helped unlock the mysteries of genetics and earned a Nobel Prize. These and countless other women have broken barriers and changed the course of our history, allowing women and men who followed them the opportunity to reach greater heights.

Despite these achievements, 46 years since the passage of the Equal Pay Act and 233 years since our Nation was established with the principle of equal justice under law, women across America continue to experience discrimination in the form of pay inequity every day. Women in the United States earn only 78 cents for every dollar a man earns, and today marks the inauspicious occasion when a woman's earnings finally catch up with a man's from the previous year. On National Equal Pay Day, we underscore the importance of this issue to all Americans.

If we wish to honor our Nation's highest ideals, we must end wage discrimination. The Founders established a timeless framework of rights for the American people. Generation after generation has worked and sacrificed so that this framework might be applied equally to all Americans. To honor these Americans and stay true to our founding ideals, we must carry forward this tradition and breathe life into these principles by supporting equal pay for men and women.

Wage discrimination has a tangible and negative impact on women and families. When women receive less than their deserved compensation, they take home less for themselves and their loved ones. Utilities and groceries are more difficult to afford. Mortgages and rent bills are harder to pay. Children's higher education is less financially feasible. In later years of life, the retirement that many women have worked so hard for—and have earned—is not possible. This problem is particularly dire for women who are single and the sole supporters of their families. Women should not and need not endure these consequences.

My Administration is working to advance pay equity in the United States. The first bill I signed into law as President, the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act of 2009, allows more women to challenge pay discrimination by extending the timeline within which complaints can be filed. This law advances the struggle for equal pay, but it is only an initial step. To continue