of Puerto Rico, and the officials of the other areas under the flag of the United States of America to honor these observances with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

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

BARACK OBAMA

Proclamation 8799 of April 9, 2012


By the President of the United States of America
A Proclamation

For more than 200 years, members of our Armed Forces have upheld an oath to protect and defend. In times of war, generations have answered our country’s call with courage and valor, braving the peril of combat and pressing onward in the face of tremendous adversity. Their extraordinary service reflects our highest ideals, and their sacrifice will forever live on in our national memory. On National Former Prisoner of War Recognition Day, we pay solemn tribute to those patriots who gave their freedom to preserve our own.

Thousands of America’s sons and daughters have suffered unspeakably as captives in foreign lands. Many prisoners of war experienced physical torture and profound anguish, subjected to inhumane treatment and cut off from their comrades, their country, and their loved ones. Some would never return. Yet, in the direst circumstances, these service members demonstrated indomitable courage and unbreakable resolve. They stood fast for what they believed in, making immeasurable sacrifices for the millions they protected. At home, spouses, children, parents, and friends called upon that same spirit of perseverance to sustain them through long periods of prayer and uncertainty.

When he chronicled the experiences of our GIs during World War II, Ernie Pyle wrote that their world can never be known to the rest of us. Though the sacrifices they made and the burdens they bore may defy our full understanding, it is our moral obligation to keep faith with our men and women in uniform, our veterans, and their families—to honor their service through the support of a grateful Nation. Today, we recognize heroes who endured one of war’s most tragic costs. For them, and for all who have served, let us rededicate ourselves to fulfilling the sacred trust we share with all those who have worn the uniform of the United States of America.

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 9, 2012, as National Former Prisoner of War Recognition Day. I call upon all Americans to observe this day of remembrance by honoring all American prisoners of war, our service members, and our veterans. I also call upon Federal, State,
Proclamations

and local government officials and organizations to observe this day with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

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

BARACK OBAMA

Proclamation 8800 of April 17, 2012


By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Working women power America’s economy and sustain our middle class. For millions of families across our country, women’s wages mean food on the table, decent medical care, and timely mortgage payments. Yet, in 2010—47 years after President John F. Kennedy signed the Equal Pay Act of 1963—women who worked full-time earned only 77 percent of what their male counterparts did. The pay gap was even greater for African American and Latina women, with African American women earning 64 cents and Latina women earning 56 cents for every dollar earned by a Caucasian man. National Equal Pay Day represents the date in the current year through which women must work to match what men earned in the previous year, reminding us that we must keep striving for an America where everyone gets an equal day’s pay for an equal day’s work.

At a time when families across our country are struggling to make ends meet, ensuring a fair wage for all parents is more important than ever. Women are breadwinners in a growing number of families, and women’s earnings play an increasingly important role in families’ incomes. For them, fair pay is even more than a basic right—it is an economic necessity. That is why my Administration is committed to securing equal pay for equal work. The Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act, the first bill I signed as President, empowers women to recover wages lost to discrimination by extending the time period in which an employee can file a claim. In 2010, I was proud to create the National Equal Pay Task Force to identify and combat equal pay violations. The Task Force has helped women recover millions in lost wages, built collaborative training programs that educate employees about their rights and inform employers of their obligations, and facilitated an unprecedented level of inter-agency coordination to improve enforcement of equal pay laws.

Working women are at the heart of an America built to last. Equal pay will strengthen our families, grow our economy, and enable the best ideas and boldest innovations to flourish—regardless of the innovator’s gender. On National Equal Pay Day, let us resolve to become a Nation that values the contributions of our daughters as much as those of our sons, denies them no opportunity, and sets no limits on their dreams.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, BARACK OBAMA, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and