

# Presidential Documents

Title 3—

Proclamation 6941 of October 14, 1996

The President

White Cane Safety Day, 1996

By the President of the United States of America

## A Proclamation

In the summer of 1996, the remarkable display of athletic excellence at the Tenth Paralympic Games in Atlanta, Georgia, inspired viewers around the world. Athletes from across our country, including many who are blind or visually impaired, participated in these games. The tenacity and commitment to excellence that these athletes showed in Atlanta are rich resources for our Nation. From their performance in the Paralympics, and indeed from their many contributions throughout our Nation's history, blind and visually impaired Americans have demonstrated how much they have to contribute.

Individuals with disabilities, like all people, use many tools in their everyday lives, some simple and some technologically sophisticated. The tool most commonly used by blind and visually impaired people is the white cane. This basic instrument enables them to detect obstacles, steps, drop-offs, and changes in surface textures. The independence that blind and visually impaired people gain through the use of the white cane enriches their lives—and those of all Americans—by allowing them to participate fully in and contribute generously to our society.

Blind and visually impaired individuals make valuable contributions to our society and our economy. But they need more than the white cane to achieve their full potential; they also need equal opportunity and protection from discrimination. That is why we must continue to vigorously enforce the Americans with Disabilities Act, which prohibits discrimination against blind and visually impaired people and those with other disabilities, and ensures them access to services that all other Americans take for granted.

To honor the numerous achievements of blind and visually impaired individuals, and to recognize the significance of the white cane as a symbol of their freedom and independence in our society, the Congress of the United States, by joint resolution approved October 6, 1964, has designated October 15 of each year as “White Cane Safety Day,” and authorized the President to issue a proclamation in observance of this commemoration.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim October 15, 1996, as White Cane Safety Day. I call upon the people of the United States, government officials, educators, and business leaders to observe this day with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this fourteenth day of October, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-six, and

of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-first.

*William Clinton*

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