

Proclamation 7703 of September 12, 2003**National Historically Black Colleges and Universities Week, 2003**

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

Historically Black Colleges and Universities have a distinguished past and an important future in providing higher education for Americans throughout our country. As we celebrate National Historically Black Colleges and Universities Week, we recognize these institutions for their dedication to academic excellence. And we reaffirm our Nation's commitment to equal educational opportunities for all Americans.

Since the mid 1800s, Historically Black Colleges and Universities have provided superb education and training to many Americans. And these schools opened the door to African Americans when other doors were shamefully barred. Since their inception, these schools have furthered the development of young people who went on to become leaders in government, business, education, science, the military, law, and many other fields. Graduates of Historically Black Colleges and Universities have made great contributions to America, and continue to serve as role models for all Americans.

The struggles and many successes of America's Historically Black Colleges and Universities are the struggles and successes of our Nation. Today, our Nation's 105 Historically Black Colleges and Universities are building on their commitment to excellence and their integral position within our higher education system. Our Nation must continue to support these schools for the sake of our students and our future.

In 2002, I signed an Executive Order supporting the White House Initiative on Historically Black Colleges and Universities to help find new ways to strengthen these schools. My Administration also has sought to increase fiscal year 2004 funding for Historically Black Colleges and Universities by 5 percent, requesting more than \$224 million. In addition, the President's Board of Advisors on Historically Black Colleges and Universities is helping these colleges and universities benefit from Federal programs, obtain private-sector support for their endowments, and build private-sector partnerships to strengthen faculty development and cooperative research.

America's Historically Black Colleges and Universities have a proud and storied tradition. America recognizes and salutes their history and achievements and will work for their continued success.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE W. BUSH, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim September 14 through September 20, 2003, as National Historically Black Colleges and Universities Week. I call upon public officials, educators, librarians, and all the people of the United States to observe this week with appropriate ceremonies, activities, and programs as we demonstrate our appreciation for these important institutions and their many successful graduates.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twelfth day of September, in the year of our Lord two thousand three, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-eighth.

GEORGE W. BUSH

Proclamation 7704 of September 12, 2003

Small Business Week, 2003

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

The success of small businesses in America reflects the innovation, determination, and hard work of the American people. During Small Business Week, we celebrate the entrepreneurs and business people who create goods, services, and jobs, and bring opportunity and economic prosperity to communities throughout our country. We also reaffirm our commitment to helping more small business owners and their employees realize the American Dream.

Small businesses create the majority of new jobs in our Nation and account for more than half of the output of our economy. They lead the way in generating new ideas and creating new technologies, goods, and services for our country and for the world.

Small businesses also reflect the diversity of America. Nearly 40 percent of small companies in the United States are owned by women. There are also more than 3 million minority-owned small businesses across the country.

Because small businesses are vital to our Nation's prosperity and reflect the hard work of the American people, my Administration has taken important steps to assist small businesses and the people they employ. We have reduced taxes, encouraged investment, and removed obstacles to growth. The Jobs and Growth Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2003 I signed into law will provide 23 million small business owners with tax cuts averaging more than \$2,200 each. The Act also quadrupled the amount that small businesses can expense for new capital investments, encouraging new investment in technology, machinery, and other equipment. This new technology and equipment will increase productivity and create new jobs, thereby contributing to the overall strength of our economy.

We are also seeking to permanently eliminate the death tax. With the repeal of this tax, small business men and women will be able to pass their life's work to the next generation without having to pay a punitive tax that in many cases forces the sale of the business or many of its assets. And I support legislation that would make it easier for small businesses to offer health coverage options to their employees. Through Association Health Plans, small businesses could pool together to offer group plans to all of their employees, like those available to large businesses. In addition, we are working to streamline small business regulations and paperwork. To this end, I issued an Ex-