

PROCLAMATION 4141

White Cane Safety Day, 1972*By the President of the United States of America*June 30, 1972**A Proclamation**

For the more than one million Americans with severe visual disability, mobility is one of life's most basic and pressing problems. Even moving about in a familiar room is a complex task for someone who cannot see. How much greater is the job of navigating unfamiliar and hazardous city streets.

Although there are a number of aids which sightless people can use to help them move about, none is so simple, yet so helpful, as the white cane. It enables a sightless person to move about easily, skillfully, and, most important, independently.

Not only does the white cane liberate the body, it strengthens the spirit of its user, instilling confidence and self-respect. It transforms blindness from a tragedy to a handicap which can be overcome. By permitting mobility, the white cane may enable a blind person to hold a steady job without depending on others for transportation. It allows him to shop, to enjoy leisure time, and to visit with neighbors and friends.

The white cane user wants neither charity nor pity from the rest of us. He does not expect a safe passage as he walks down and across the street. And he deserves understanding, cooperation, and courtesy, particularly from motor vehicle drivers and bicycle riders. Taking an extra moment to yield the right-of-way to a pedestrian with a white cane may cost the driver a second or two, but failing to do so could cost a sightless walker his life. We all must learn to recognize the white cane and take the necessary action to assure the safety of its user.

To make all Americans more fully aware of the significance of the white cane and the need for extra care and courtesy when approaching its user, the Congress, by a joint resolution approved October 6, 1964 (78 Stat. 1003), has authorized the President to proclaim October 15 of each year as White Cane Safety Day.

36 USC 169d.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RICHARD NIXON, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim October 15, 1972, as White Cane Safety Day.

I urge all Americans to mark this occasion by greater consideration for the special needs of the visually handicapped, and particularly by learning to heed the white cane in order that our traffic-filled streets may become safer for all, sighted and sightless alike.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this thirtieth day of June, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred seventy-two, and of the Independence of the United States of America the one hundred ninety-sixth.



PROCLAMATION 4142

National Voter Registration Month

July 13, 1972

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

As we continually work to construct a better and better Nation, America has no need of sidewalk superintendents. And any person who is qualified to vote, but who does not register to vote, can be little more than a sidewalk superintendent standing apart from the vital project of building national progress in the challenging era of the 1970s.

In recent years, Federal and State governments have taken historic actions to extend the voting privilege to more and more of our citizens, including those between 18 and 21 years of age.

All of these efforts to broaden the base of the American constituency—in order to insure continuing national political vitality and accurate representation—will have been in vain, however, if the newly eligible voters do not activate their newly won voting rights by registering according to the laws of the States.

There is no place for apathy in an America facing the momentous challenges and opportunities of the era of the 1970s. The Nation needs the talents and the energies of each and every citizen, and it needs all their votes on election day.

I am convinced that nationwide, non-partisan voter registration campaigns could substantially reduce the number of qualified citizens who