

NOTE: The President's statement was included in a White House statement announcing the President's request to Congress for funds to rebuild the Cypress Freeway.

Proclamation 6602—Child Health Day, 1993

October 4, 1993

*By the President of the United States
of America*

A Proclamation

Our children are our future. Therefore, making sure that our children are healthy must be a national concern. For 65 years, Presidents of the United States have proclaimed one day every year as "Child Health Day," a time to focus on the health and well-being of our Nation's children.

Over the years, we have recognized again and again that it is better to try to guarantee the health of our children than to attempt to restore their health once it has been jeopardized. A healthy childhood charts a path for a healthy adult life. Prevention is, therefore, primary. Through preventive measures, we help children avoid the pain and suffering of disease and disability; we stop unnecessary spending; and we decrease the number of childhood deaths.

We possess the ability to prevent many childhood diseases and injuries, and we must use this ability. Every child needs access to primary health care. The necessary immunizations against nine different contagious diseases must be given to children at the recommended ages. Injuries, the greatest threat to our children's well-being, can be reduced by introducing into our daily routines various safety measures. For example, the use of car seats, seat belts, and bicycle helmets helps to guard against hazards to which children are especially vulnerable. There are dangers in the home, as well, such as careless storage of poisons and unlocked staircase gates. Paying attention to our children and to potential risks to their safety can help to safeguard them in our homes.

We can prevent our children from making unhealthy choices, both by the rules we set for them and by the rules we follow our-

selves. Many of the behaviors that will affect their health—choices about what to eat; the dangers of smoking, drinking, using illegal drugs, or irresponsible sexual behavior; how to handle their feelings and the pressure of their peers—will be learned from the models they see around them. We have an opportunity, as well as a responsibility, to shape the future for our children. In our personal lives, that responsibility extends to those whose lives we touch in our families and in our communities.

The Congress, by joint resolution approved May 18, 1928, as amended (36 U.S.C. 143), has called for the designation of the first Monday in October as "Child Health Day" and has requested the President to issue a proclamation in observance of this day.

Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim Monday, October 4, 1993, as Child Health Day. On that day and every day throughout the year, I urge all Americans to renew their commitment to protecting and developing our most valuable asset—our children.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this fourth day of October, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-three, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and eighteenth.

William J. Clinton

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NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on October 7.

Memorandum on the Freedom of Information Act

October 4, 1993

*Memorandum for Heads of Departments and
Agencies*

Subject: The Freedom of Information Act

I am writing to call your attention to a subject that is of great importance to the American public and to all Federal departments

and agencies—the administration of the Freedom of Information Act, as amended (the “Act”). The Act is a vital part of the participatory system of government. I am committed to enhancing its effectiveness in my Administration.

For more than a quarter century now, the Freedom of Information Act has played a unique role in strengthening our democratic form of government. The statute was enacted based upon the fundamental principle that an informed citizenry is essential to the democratic process and that the more the American people know about their government the better they will be governed. Openness in government is essential to accountability and the Act has become an integral part of that process.

The Freedom of Information Act, moreover, has been one of the primary means by which members of the public inform themselves about their government. As Vice President Gore made clear in the National Performance Review, the American people are the Federal Government’s customers. Federal departments and agencies should handle requests for information in a customer-friendly manner. The use of the Act by ordinary citizens is not complicated, nor should it be. The existence of unnecessary bureaucratic hurdles has no place in its implementation.

I therefore call upon all Federal departments and agencies to renew their commitment to the Freedom of Information Act, to its underlying principles of government openness, and to its sound administration. This is an appropriate time for all agencies to take a fresh look at their administration of the Act, to reduce backlogs of Freedom of Information Act requests, and to conform agency practice to the new litigation guidance issued by the Attorney General, which is attached.

Further, I remind agencies that our commitment to openness requires more than merely responding to requests from the public. Each agency has a responsibility to distribute information on its own initiative, and to enhance public access through the use of electronic information systems. Taking these

steps will ensure compliance with both the letter and spirit of the Act.

William J. Clinton

Message to the Congress on Whaling Activities of Norway

October 4, 1993

To the Congress of the United States:

On August 5, 1993, the Secretary of Commerce certified that Norway’s resumption of commercial harvesting of minke whales has diminished the effectiveness of the International Whaling Commission (IWC). The IWC acted to continue the moratorium on all commercial whaling at its most recent meeting last spring. Despite this action, Norway has recommenced commercial whaling of the Northeastern Atlantic minke, noting that it has lodged an objection to the moratorium. This letter constitutes my report to the Congress pursuant to section 8(b) of the Fishermen’s Protective Act of 1967, as amended (Pelly Amendment) (22 U.S.C. 1978(a)).

The United States is deeply opposed to commercial whaling: the United States does not engage in commercial whaling, and the United States does not allow the import of whale meat or whale products. While some native Alaskans engage in narrowly circumscribed subsistence whaling, this is approved by the IWC through a quota for “aboriginal whaling.” The United States also firmly supports the proposed whale sanctuary in the Antarctic.

The United States has an equally strong commitment to science-based international solutions to global conservation problems. The United States recognizes that not every country agrees with our position against commercial whaling. The issue at hand is the absence of a credible, agreed management and monitoring regime that would ensure that commercial whaling is kept within a science-based limit.

I believe that Norway’s action is serious enough to justify sanctions as authorized by the Pelly Amendment. Therefore, I have directed that a list of potential sanctions, in-