

itoring of agricultural and manufacturing practices abroad, to assist foreign countries to improve those practices where necessary, and to prevent the importation of unsafe produce, including by detecting unsafe food at the dock or border. I especially urge you to consider the best ways to target inspection and testing toward those areas where problems are most likely to occur.

In addition to taking these actions, you should accelerate whatever food safety research is necessary to support them. You should also call upon the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Labor, and other agencies as necessary, to provide you with assistance in achieving this goal. These steps, taken together and in coordination with the proposed legislation I will send to the Congress, will improve the safety of fruits and vegetables for all Americans.

William J. Clinton

Proclamation 7031—National Disability Employment Awareness Month, 1997

October 2, 1997

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

America has always been blessed with abundant natural resources; but we sometimes fail to recognize that we have been blessed with rich human resources as well. Millions of people in thousands of professions have built this great country with their labor and made a reality of the American Dream for themselves and their families. But for 20 percent of our population, that dream has too often been deferred or denied. Americans with disabilities have had to overcome barriers in communication, transportation, architecture, and attitude to take their rightful place in our Nation's work force.

If America is to continue to grow and prosper, if we are to lead the challenging global economy of the 21st century, we cannot afford to ignore the talents, energy, and creativity of the 54 million Americans with disabilities. Thanks to the Americans with Disabilities Act, we are making significant

progress in eliminating workplace discrimination and ensuring equal job opportunities for people with disabilities. This landmark civil rights legislation, enacted 7 years ago with bipartisan support, has opened doors and brought down barriers across our country for people with disabilities. It has empowered them with the opportunity to become employees, taxpayers, and active participants in the life of their communities.

To build on this progress, government at every level must work in partnership with business, labor, and community organizations to ensure that all Americans, regardless of disability, can live and learn and work alongside their fellow citizens. Only when we guarantee the inclusion, empowerment, and independence of all our people will America fulfill its great promise of freedom and opportunity.

To recognize the full potential of individuals with disabilities and to encourage all Americans to work toward their full integration into the work force, the Congress, by joint resolution approved August 11, 1945, as amended (36 U.S.C. 155), has designated October of each year as "National Disability Employment Awareness Month."

Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim October 1997 as National Disability Employment Awareness Month. I call upon government officials, educators, labor leaders, employers, and the people of the United States to observe this month with appropriate programs and activities that reaffirm our determination to achieve the full integration into the work force of people with disabilities.

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

William J. Clinton

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NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on October 6.

Statement on the National Economy
October 3, 1997

Today the Labor Department announced more good news for America's workers and their families. Real wages are rising, the American economy has created 13.2 million new jobs since the beginning of my administration, and for the first time in 24 years, the unemployment rate has remained at or below 5 percent for 6 consecutive months. We have the most solid American economy in a generation, with strong investment, low unemployment, and low inflation.

While the economy is strong, we still have more to do to keep the American jobs machine on the move and ensure that all Americans have the opportunity to benefit from our growing economy. We must continue our three-part economic strategy that is helping move America forward. We must ensure fiscal responsibility for future generations. We must continue to invest and expect the most of our people through initiatives such as national education test standards. And Congress must provide traditional trade negotiating authority so we can reach fair trade agreements with other countries, breaking down trade barriers to American goods, and creating high-paying jobs for American workers.

Proclamation 7032—Fire Prevention Week, 1997

October 3, 1997

*By the President of the United States
of America*

A Proclamation

Of all the disasters that confront Americans every year, few cause more loss of life and property than fire. Across the country each day, fire threatens our communities, our livelihoods, and our lives. Last year alone, almost 5,000 men, women, and children perished in fires, and nearly 80 percent of these deaths occurred in homes. This tragic statistic is a call to action for all of us, not only to remain vigilant in our efforts to prevent fires, but also to learn how to react quickly and sensibly when fires occur.

Many people do not understand the speed at which fire can spread, the intensity of its heat, or the toxic power of its smoke. Because a quick, decisive response often means the difference between life and death, it is important to learn about fire, to recognize how deadly a threat it is, and to react to it immediately. The National Fire Protection Association, in partnership with the Federal Emergency Management Agency and our Nation's fire services, has selected "Know When to Go! React Fast To Fire!" as the theme of this year's Fire Prevention Week. This theme reinforces a simple but essential element of fire safety: escape planning.

Because approximately 80 percent of last year's fatal fires occurred in the home, every family should develop a home escape plan. If a smoke or fire alarm sounds, everyone must react quickly. When away from home, we need to make it a habit to locate the nearest exit in any building we occupy. Most important, we must never reenter a burning building.

By following these basic safety rules, we can save lives and reduce the risks to our Nation's firefighters. Every 16 seconds, a fire department responds to a fire somewhere in the United States. Last year, thousands of firefighters were injured, and 92 made the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty. Our Nation will acknowledge the extraordinary dedication of these valiant men and women by paying tribute to America's career and volunteer firefighters on Sunday, October 5, 1997, at the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Service in Emmitsburg, Maryland.

Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton, 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 October 5 through October 11, 1997, as Fire Prevention Week. I encourage the people of the United States to take an active role in fire prevention not only during this week, but throughout the year. I also call upon all Americans to honor the courageous members of our Nation's fire and emergency services by learning about the dangers posed by fire and by preparing their friends and family members to react immediately and safely to fires when they occur.