

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

GEORGE W. BUSH

Proclamation 7843 of November 4, 2004

National Hospice Month, 2004

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Hospice programs are a vital part of our Nation's health care system. They provide comfort, peace, and dignity for individuals in the final stage of life and their families. During National Hospice Month, we recognize the dedicated professionals and volunteers who provide hospice care, and we emphasize the importance of respecting and honoring life in all of its seasons.

For many terminally ill patients, hospice care is a compassionate alternative to traditional care at a hospital or nursing home. Hospice physicians, nurses, counselors, and volunteers focus on making patients as comfortable as possible, while allowing patients to remain at home and close to their families. With comprehensive assistance, these caregivers help control pain and other symptoms and provide emotional and spiritual support to both patient and family. In 2002, according to the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization, an estimated 885,000 individuals were admitted to one of the over 3,000 hospice programs in the United States.

My Administration has acted to strengthen and modernize Medicare for our seniors, and we remain committed to providing a health care system that meets the needs of every patient. Hospice services are covered by Medicare, and many States offer hospice care under their Medicaid programs. The Medicare legislation that I signed into law last December provides that Medicare will, for the first time, cover hospice consultation services so that terminally ill patients and their families will better understand end-of-life issues and care options. The legislation also makes the program more flexible and responsive to the needs of patients, allows patients to designate a nurse practitioner to coordinate their hospice care, and directs the Secretary of Health and Human Services to explore ways to make hospice care more widely available to beneficiaries who live in rural areas.

Americans believe in the worth and dignity of every person, and we are promoting a culture of life in our Nation. By caring for life at every stage, we can create a more compassionate and merciful world.

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 November 2004 as National Hospice Month. I encourage all our citizens to observe this month with appropriate programs and activities. I also ask Americans to recognize our health care professionals and volunteers for their contributions to helping those facing terminal illness receive quality care.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this fourth day of November, in the year of our Lord two thousand four, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-ninth.

GEORGE W. BUSH

Proclamation 7844 of November 9, 2004

Veterans Day, 2004

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Americans live in freedom because of our veterans' courage, dedication to duty, and love of country. On Veterans Day, we honor these brave men and women who have served in our Armed Forces and defended our Nation.

Across America, there are more than 25 million veterans. Their ranks include generations of citizens who have risked their lives while serving in military conflicts, including World War II, Korea, Vietnam, the Persian Gulf, and the war on terror. They have fought for the security of our country and the peace of the world. They have defended our founding ideals, protected the innocent, and liberated the oppressed from tyranny and terror. They have known the hardships and the fears and the tragic losses of war. Our veterans know that in the harshest hours of conflict they serve just and honorable purposes.

Through the years, our veterans have returned home from their duties to become active and responsible citizens in their communities, further contributing to the growth and development of our Nation. Their commitment to service inspires all Americans.

With respect for and in recognition of the contributions our service men and women have made to the cause of peace and freedom around the world, the Congress has provided (5 U.S.C. 6103(a)) that November 11 of each year shall be set aside as a legal public holiday to honor veterans.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE W. BUSH, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim November 11, 2004, as Veterans Day and urge all Americans to observe November 7 through November 13, 2004, as National Veterans Awareness Week. I urge all Americans to recognize the valor and sacrifice of our veterans through ceremonies and prayers. I call upon Federal, State, and local officials to display the flag of the United States and to encourage and participate in patriotic activities in their communities. I invite civic and fraternal organizations, places of worship, schools, businesses, unions, and the media to support this national observance with commemorative expressions and programs.

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

GEORGE W. BUSH