

and Rita. Balancing the demands of their families, civilian careers, and military assignments, members of our Guard and Reserve demonstrate personal courage, love of country, and a commitment to duty that inspires all Americans.

Employers play a critical role in helping the men and women of the National Guard and Reserve carry out their mission. In offices, schools, hospitals, and other workplaces, employers provide time off, pay, health-care benefits, and job security to their Guard and Reserve employees. These patriotic efforts allow our men and women in uniform to focus on their military assignments and help strengthen our country. Americans are grateful to these employers for putting the needs of our citizens and our country's safety and security first.

As we continue to fight terrorism and advance peace around the world, Americans stand strongly and proudly behind the men and women of the National Guard and Reserve, and we express our appreciation for the commitment of their employers.

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 October 16 through October 22, 2005, as National Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve Week. I encourage all Americans to join me in expressing our thanks to members of our National Guard and Reserve and their civilian employers for their patriotism and sacrifices on behalf of our Nation. I also call upon State and local officials, private organizations, businesses, and all military commanders to observe this week with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this fourteenth day of October, in the year of our Lord two thousand five, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirtieth.

GEORGE W. BUSH

Proclamation 7948 of October 14, 2005

National Forest Products Week, 2005

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

America's forests are a source of pride, and they provide crucial products and materials for our citizens and communities. As we celebrate National Forest Products Week, we recognize the importance of our forests to our economy and way of life, and we reaffirm our commitment to protecting them through wise stewardship and sensible land management.

Across our Nation, people and businesses use forest products to meet their daily needs. Forests provide paper for books and newspapers, lumber for homes and buildings, and materials for countless other items. As good citizens, we have a shared responsibility to cultivate and sustain our forests and minimize the risk of catastrophic fires that harm people, property, and the environment.

My Administration has made good forest stewardship a priority. Through the Healthy Forests Initiative, we are reducing the frequency and severity of wildfires by thinning out and removing forest undergrowth before disaster strikes. The commonsense management practices we are implementing are helping to strengthen our economy, keep communities safe, save the lives of firefighters, and protect threatened and endangered habitats and wildlife.

Sound conservation policies and responsible maintenance provide improved protection for our forests and greater economic prosperity for our citizens. During National Forest Products Week, we renew our commitment to sustain America's forests.

Recognizing the importance of our forests, the Congress, by Public Law 86–753 (36 U.S.C. 123), as amended, has designated the week beginning on the third Sunday in October of each year as “National Forest Products Week”; and has authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation in observance of this week.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE W. BUSH, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim October 16 through October 22, 2005, as National Forest Products Week. I call upon all Americans to observe this week with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this fourteenth day of October, in the year of our Lord two thousand five, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirtieth.

GEORGE W. BUSH

Proclamation 7949 of October 14, 2005

White Cane Safety Day, 2005

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Americans who are blind or visually impaired are valuable and contributing members of our society, and many use a white cane to help them succeed at school, home, or work. White canes give these individuals greater mobility and enable them to participate in more aspects of community life. On White Cane Safety Day, we celebrate the progress that has been made for those who are blind or visually impaired, and we reaffirm our commitment to ensuring that these citizens can live and work with greater freedom and independence.

One of our Nation's defining values is compassion, and we must make certain that all our citizens are able to harness their talents, engage in productive work, and participate fully in society. My Administration is working to fulfill this goal for individuals with disabilities through the New Freedom Initiative. This comprehensive program helps increase the development and use of assistive and universally designed technologies, expand educational and employment opportunities, and improve access into daily community life. By working to reduce barriers and change old ways of thinking, we can help ensure that our Nation's opportunities are more accessible to all.