

Proclamation 7000 of May 7, 1997**Peace Officers Memorial Day and Police Week, 1997**

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Law enforcement officers are true heroes, quietly risking their lives every day to protect our public safety and private property. The routine, everyday nature of their courage makes it all the more extraordinary. Day and night, these brave men and women leave home, put on their badges, and report for duty, putting their lives on the line for the rest of us.

Today, an estimated 587,000 men and women are sworn police officers, working to enforce our Nation's laws and maintain order in our society. As citizens we owe these officers respect and gratitude, and Police Week is a welcome time for us to join together and salute these officers for the selfless work they carry out so faithfully all year long.

Sadly, during Police Week we also pause, on Peace Officers Memorial Day, to remember our fallen officers. Last year, 117 Federal, State, and local officers were killed in the line of duty. Although this number dropped to the lowest level in over 30 years—and the number of police officers killed by firearms alone dropped to 55 from 71 the previous year—these statistics, compiled by the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund, remain a cause for great concern. The loss of any police officer is a tragedy, and as a Nation, we mourn and remember these men and women who made the ultimate sacrifice by giving their lives. While we can never repay the debt we owe to these fallen officers and their families, we can—and must—honor their memory by carrying on their crusade to make America a better and safer place.

By a joint resolution approved October 1, 1962 (76 Stat. 676), the Congress has authorized and requested the President to designate May 15 of each year as "Peace Officers Memorial Day" and the week in which it falls as "Police Week," and, by Public Law 103-322 (36 U.S.C. 175), has directed that the flag be flown at half-staff on Peace Officers Memorial Day.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim May 15, 1997, as Peace Officers Memorial Day and May 11 through May 17, 1997, as Police Week. I call upon the people of the United States to observe these occasions with appropriate ceremonies, programs, and activities. I also request the Governors of the United States and of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, as well as the appropriate officials of all units of government, to direct that the flag be flown at half-staff on Peace Officers Memorial Day on all buildings, grounds, and naval vessels throughout the United States and all areas under its jurisdiction and control. I also invite all Americans to display the flag at half-staff from their homes on that day.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this seventh day of May, 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-first.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON