

## Presidential Documents

**Proclamation 7151 of November 20, 1998**

### **National Family Caregivers Week, 1998**

**By the President of the United States of America**

#### **A Proclamation**

As American families enjoy Thanksgiving this year, millions of aging parents and grandparents or relatives with disabilities will be able to join these celebrations because of the loving support of family caregivers. Each day these generous women and men devote their time and energies to care for family members who can no longer live independently or who need assistance to remain in the familiar surroundings of their own homes.

The need for such caregivers in our Nation is growing. We are blessed to live in a time when medicine and technology have helped us live longer; as a result, people 85 years of age and older constitute America's fastest-growing age group. For these older Americans, however, the blessing of longevity also brings with it an increased likelihood of disability and chronic disease, reduced physical and mental agility, and higher risk of injury or illness—all of which create a greater need for care.

Families across our country have quickly responded to this need, but often at great financial, physical, and emotional sacrifice. Family members, working without pay, are the major providers of long-term care in the United States, and half of all caregivers today are over the age of 65 and are often themselves in declining health. Women, who tend to be the primary family caregivers in our society, often must juggle full-time work and family schedules with their caregiving responsibilities.

The contributions that family caregivers make to our society are best gauged by the impact they have in improving the quality of life of the family members for whom they care. Thanks to family caregivers, those they serve retain a measure of independence, remain with friends and relatives, and continue making contributions to our Nation.

This week, as we celebrate Thanksgiving and reflect with gratitude on our many blessings, let us remember to give thanks for the family caregivers among us whose love and care make life brighter for so many and whose dedication and generosity contribute so much to the strength and well-being of our Nation.

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 November 22 through November 28, 1998, as National Family Caregivers Week. I call upon Government officials, businesses, communities, educators, volunteers, and the people of the United States to pay tribute to and acknowledge the heroic efforts of caregivers this special week and throughout the year.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twentieth day of November, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-eight, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-third.

*William Clinton*

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