

Presidential Documents

Title 3—**Proclamation 7149 of November 19, 1998****The President****National Great American Smokeout Day, 1998****By the President of the United States of America****A Proclamation**

One of the greatest public health threats facing Americans today is tobacco addiction and all the related health disorders that come with it. More Americans die every year from tobacco-related diseases than from AIDS, illegal drugs, alcohol, fires, car accidents, murders, and suicides combined. Although we have heard for decades the Surgeon General's warning that smoking kills, each day more than 3,000 young Americans become regular smokers—and more than 1,000 of them will die prematurely as a result.

This past April, the Surgeon General issued a new report on tobacco that underscores the urgent need for comprehensive legislation to reduce youth smoking. Over the past 6 years, youth smoking has grown by one-third, increasing by an alarming 80 percent among African American youth. Currently, more than 36 percent of high school students smoke, and recent statistics released by the Centers for Disease Control also reaffirm what we already know: nicotine creates an addiction that is extremely difficult to overcome. Unfortunately, 86 percent of our young people who smoke daily and try to quit are unsuccessful, and casual teenage smokers—even those who smoke as few as three cigarettes a month—often go on to become regular smokers.

My Administration has worked hard for comprehensive and effective tobacco legislation that will cut teen smoking. We will continue our efforts until the Congress has acted to pass such legislation. Our 1999 budget also includes an unprecedented increase in funding for research at the National Institutes of Health, and the National Cancer Institute plans to allocate millions of those dollars for research into prevention and cessation programs to reduce tobacco use.

Each year, the Great American Smokeout gives us the opportunity to do what we should do every day: raise awareness among all Americans—but especially among children and teens—of the dangers of smoking. Through such youth-related promotions as the Great American SmokeScream and the Great American Smokeout Pledge, we can encourage young people who smoke to stop, and we can convince those who don't smoke that they should never start. Adult smokers should also remember the power of personal example and make a sincere effort to stop smoking on this special day, taking an important step toward a better, healthier future.

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 19, 1998, as National Great American Smokeout Day. I call upon all Americans to join together in an effort to educate our children about the dangers of tobacco use, and I urge both smokers and nonsmokers to take this opportunity to begin healthier lifestyles that set a positive example for young people.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this nineteenth 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

[FR Doc. 98-31531

Filed 11-23-98; 8:45 am]

Billing code 3195-01-P