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# Presidential Documents

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Title 3—

**Proclamation 7121 of September 15, 1998**

**The President**

**National Hispanic Heritage Month, 1998**

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

## **A Proclamation**

The presence of Hispanics on this continent predates the founding of our Nation, and, as among the first to settle in the New World, Hispanics and their descendants have had a profound and lasting influence on American history, values, and culture. Since the arrival of the earliest Spanish settlers more than 400 years ago, millions of Hispanic men and women have come to the United States from Mexico, Puerto Rico, Cuba and other Caribbean regions, Central America, South America, and Spain, in search of peace, freedom, and a more prosperous future. They brought with them a deep commitment to family and community, a strong work ethic, and an unwavering belief in the American Dream.

In a Nation that derives so much of its strength from many cultures and races, Hispanic Americans are a thriving force in our society and a vital part of our economy. For example, businesses started and operated by Hispanic women constitute one of the fastest-growing categories of small business in the United States today. This entrepreneurial spirit has contributed to the strongest U.S. economy in a generation.

As we approach the 21st century and face the challenges of a global economy, we recognize that the success of our Nation is closely tied to the success of our citizens of Hispanic heritage, who are a large and increasing segment of our population. My Administration is committed to ensuring that Hispanic Americans have the opportunities they need to realize their dreams of a better life.

The key to those dreams is education. We must continue to reach out to Hispanic youth, encouraging them to stay in school, graduate from high school, and go on to college so that they can compete successfully for good jobs and take advantage of promising career opportunities. As part of these efforts, my Administration is committed to ensuring that our \$600 million Hispanic Education Action Plan is fully funded. This initiative will provide the investments needed to help Hispanic students master basic skills and become proficient in English. It will also assist schools in implementing reforms to reduce dropout rates, enable adults to receive basic skills training and participate in English-as-a-second-language programs, and offer assistance to colleges and universities that serve large numbers of Hispanic students.

This month, as we remember with special gratitude the gifts that Hispanic Americans bring to every aspect of our national life, let us reaffirm our efforts to ensure that all Hispanic American families have the tools and opportunities they need to make the most of their lives. Working together, we can meet the challenges of the 21st century in a way that will celebrate our differences and unite us around our common values.

To honor Hispanic Americans for their many contributions to our Nation and our culture, the Congress, by Public Law 100-402, has authorized and requested the President to issue annually a proclamation designating September 15 through October 15 as "National Hispanic Heritage Month."

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim September 15 through October 15, 1998, as National Hispanic Heritage Month. I call upon all government officials, educators, and the people of the United States to honor this observance with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this fifteenth day of September, 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.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "William J. Clinton". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial "W".

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