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PRESERVATION

fax # 6-5581

Irene Bueso

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

September 13, 1999

MEMORANDUM FOR:

FIRST LADY'S STAFF (MELANNE VERVEER)
SEAN MALONEY (LISEL LOY)
CHARLES RUFF
THURGOOD MARSHALL, JR.
LARRY STEIN
✓ BRUCE REED
MARY BETH CAHILL
MINYON MOORE
MARK LINDSAY
STEPHANIE STREETT - FYI

FROM:

Lana Dickey/Maureen Hudson
for DAN BURKHARDT

SUBJECT:

(Draft Proclamation)
Citizenship Day and Constitution
Week, 1999

Attached for your review is the above-mentioned proclamation designating September 17 as "Citizenship Day," and September 17-23, 1999, as "Constitution Week."

It was submitted by the Department of Justice through the Office of Management and Budget and edited/revised by the Presidential Letters and Messages Office.

IMMEDIATE ATTENTION REQUIRED. Written or oral response required by no later than 5:00 p.m., Tuesday, September 14, 1999. IF WE HAVE NOT HEARD FROM YOU BY 5:00 p.m., WE WILL ASSUME THAT THE DRAFT IS ACCEPTABLE TO YOU.

For questions, discussion, or routine clearance, contact Lana Dickey, extension 65504, or Maureen Hudson, extension 65902, via phone or interoffice mail, in room 91. Thank you.

cc: Tim Saunders

CITIZENSHIP DAY AND CONSTITUTION WEEK, 1999

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BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

A PROCLAMATION

The Constitution is among our Nation's most cherished documents, the compass that has helped us chart America's course toward freedom, human dignity, and democracy for more than 200 years. Its text, born of the genius, experience, wariness, and idealism of our founders and hammered out through hard effort and compromise by the delegates to the Constitutional Convention, established a system of government capable of responding to the pressures of social and political change. It created a sacred covenant that continues to bind all our citizens by a set of principles based on the ideals of equality, inclusion, and independence and by a delicate balance of powers, rights, and responsibilities among citizens and their State and Federal Governments. Today, sustained by the efforts and sacrifices of generations of Americans, the U.S. Constitution is as strong and vibrant a charter of freedom as it was at the time of its adoption 212 years ago.

The 20th century has witnessed a great wave of migration of men and women to our Nation from all parts of the globe, attracted by the freedom, justice, and rule of law guaranteed by our Constitution. As they assume the responsibilities of American citizenship, they infuse fresh perspective and enthusiasm in our political process and prove to the world that a diverse people can live in peace and progress. Today we are a Nation with new hopes, new dreams, and new people, but united by a devotion to democratic ideals that have stood the test of time.

As we reflect upon America's past, we recognize that our country is still in the act of becoming the Nation envisioned by our Founders, and we realize that the Constitution is still

our surest means of succeeding. In every generation, Americans have struggled to live up to our Nation's promise, working to overcome forces of fear or ignorance or prejudice that would seek to deny the rights of others because of their gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, or disability. The 21st century may bring new challenges to the rights and liberties of American citizens, but we can be confident that the Constitution will still light a clear and shining path of freedom and justice into the future.

During Citizenship Day and Constitution Week, let us recognize the great efforts not only of our leaders, but also of ordinary Americans who labor daily to uphold and strengthen the ideals embodied in our Constitution. Whether citizens by birth or choice, we share the blessings guaranteed to us by the Constitution, and we share the responsibility of ensuring that those blessings are extended to all our people equally.

In commemoration of the signing of the Constitution and in recognition of the importance of active, responsible citizenship in preserving the Constitution's blessings for our Nation, the Congress, by joint resolution of February 29, 1952 (36 U.S.C. 153), designated September 17 as "Citizenship Day," and by joint resolution of August 2, 1956 (U.S.C. 159) requested that the President proclaim the week beginning September 17 and ending September 23 of each year as "Constitution Week."

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim September 17, 1999, as Citizenship Day and September 17 through September 23, 1999, as Constitution Week. I call upon Federal, State, and local officials, as well as leaders of civic, educational, and religious organizations, to conduct meaningful ceremonies and programs in our schools, houses of worship, and other community centers to foster a greater understanding and

appreciation of the Constitution and the rights and duties of citizenship. I also call on all citizens to rededicate themselves to the principles of the Constitution.

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