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National Defense Transportation Day and National Transportation Week, 1987

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Throughout our history, the building and improvement of transportation links have been vital to the exploration and settlement of our country and to the development of its commerce. We can all be grateful that these processes have never ceased and that the spirit of enterprise that motivated early American pioneers still thrives today.

During the early decades of our Republic, planners, engineers, and workmen built the Cumberland Road from western Maryland to central Illinois. This road started what was to become a vast, 42,000-mile network of interstate and defense highways across the United States.

Other notable undertakings illustrate the evolution of Americans' mobility. By 1825, the Erie Canal opened the Great Lakes to commerce; its success spurred a huge inland waterway system, including the St. Lawrence Seaway. By 1850, more than a thousand steamboats plied our rivers, and clipper ships came to dominate trade with China. By 1869, the transcontinental railroad was completed. Technological advances of the late 19th and early 20th centuries brought the automobile and the airplane, and further developments resulted in space flight.

Our land, water, and air transportation systems provide us with fast, efficient, and safe personal and commercial travel. They are vital not only to our economy and our personal mobility, but also to the defense of our Nation. Our ability to transport people and materials in time of emergency is a critical aspect of our national security.

In recognition of the importance of transportation and of the millions of Americans who serve and supply our transportation needs, the Congress has requested, by joint resolution approved May 16, 1957 (36 U.S.C. 160), that the third Friday in May of each year be designated as "National Defense Transportation Day"; and by joint resolution approved May 14, 1962 (36 U.S.C. 166), that the week in which that Friday falls be proclaimed "National Transportation Week."

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim Friday, May 15, 1987, as National Defense Transportation Day and the week of May 10 through May 16, 1987, as National Transportation Week. I urge the people of the United States to observe these occasions with appropriate ceremonies that will give full recognition to the importance of our transportation system to this country.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-third day of April, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and eleventh.

Ronald Reagan