

SECRETARY OF LABOR  
WASHINGTON

November 6, 2003

The President  
The White House  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

It is a privilege for us to express our full support for the issuance of a Presidential Proclamation declaring 2004 "The Year of the Veteran."

Today, our Nation is at war. Our Armed Forces have achieved great success on the battlefield, but challenges still lie ahead and we continue to call upon our men and women in uniform to stand in harm's way in defense of America.

There are currently more than 25 million living American veterans, many of whom have risked their lives to preserve our freedoms. Our veterans served on the land, at sea, and in the air, from the shores of Omaha Beach and the jungles of Vietnam, to the sands of the Persian Gulf, the mountains of Afghanistan, and many other battlefields around the globe. The members of America's military have protected our country and liberated millions of people around the world from tyranny and terror.

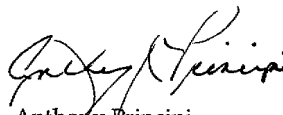
A Presidential Proclamation would initiate the first year-long celebration for all America's veterans. With this observance, we would reaffirm our commitment to those who have served this great nation. The primary objective of the celebration is to raise awareness of the valuable skills and unique traits that veterans can provide to America's workforce as we meet the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. The Proclamation would encourage celebratory events throughout the year, culminating in a national salute, scheduled for Veterans Day weekend.

We support "The Year of the Veteran" initiative and endorse this unique opportunity to honor all veterans.

Sincerely,



Elaine L. Chao  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Labor



Anthony Principi  
Secretary  
Department of Veterans Affairs

cc: Office of Cabinet Affairs

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