

# **PRESIDENTIAL PROCLAMATION 7219 OF AUGUST 2, 1999**

## **THE CONTIGUOUS ZONE OF THE UNITED STATES**

*Acronym: Contiguous Zone Proclamation*

*Citation: 64 Fed. Reg. 48,701 (September 8, 1999).*

***Executive Purpose:***

The Proclamation extends the contiguous zone of the United States to 24 nautical miles from the baselines of the United States, in accordance with international law, but not within the territorial sea of another nation.

***Summary:***

In 1999, President Clinton signed this Presidential Proclamation formally extending the United States' contiguous zone from 12 nautical miles to 24, claiming jurisdiction of these near shore waters and doubling the area within which the Coast Guard and other federal authorities can enforce U.S. environmental, customs and immigration laws at sea.

Eleven years following the claim of a 12-mile territorial sea (under President Reagan's Proclamation 5928), the U.S. formalized its claim of a 24-mile contiguous zone along with the authority to prevent infringement of its customs, fiscal, immigration, or sanitary laws and regulations within its territory or territorial sea.

The Proclamation, aimed at protecting the nation's coasts from pollution, drugs, and illegal immigration, doubles the area in which the Coast Guard and other federal authorities may board foreign vessels, advancing certain law enforcement and public health interests of the United States, as well as preventing the removal of cultural heritage found within 24 nautical miles of the U.S. coast.

The extension applies to U.S. states, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

A Proclamation

International law recognizes that coastal nations may establish zones contiguous to their territorial seas, known as contiguous zones. The contiguous zone of the United States is a zone contiguous to the territorial sea of the United States, in which the United States may exercise the control necessary to prevent infringement of its customs, fiscal, immigration, or sanitary laws and regulations within its territory or territorial sea, and to punish infringement of the above laws and regulations committed within its territory or territorial sea. Extension of the contiguous zone of the United States to the limits permitted by international law will advance the law enforcement and public health interests of the United States. Moreover, this extension is an important step in preventing the removal of cultural heritage found within 24 nautical miles of the baseline.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, by the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution of the United States, and in accordance with international law, do hereby proclaim the extension of the contiguous zone of the United States of America, including the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa, the United States Virgin Islands, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and any other territory or possession over which the United States exercises sovereignty, as follows:

The contiguous zone of the United States extends to 24 nautical miles from the baselines of the United States determined in accordance with international law, but in no case within the territorial sea of another nation.

In accordance with international law, reflected in the applicable provisions of the 1982 Convention on the Law of the Sea, within the contiguous zone of the United States the ships and aircraft of all countries enjoy the high seas freedoms of navigation and overflight and the laying of submarine cables and pipelines, and other internationally lawful uses of the sea related to those freedoms, such as those associated with the operation of ships, aircraft, and submarine cables and pipelines, and compatible with the other provisions of international law reflected in the 1982 Convention on the Law of the Sea.

Nothing in this proclamation:

- (a) amends existing Federal or State law;
- (b) amends or otherwise alters the rights and duties of the United States or other nations in the Exclusive Economic Zone of the United States established by Proclamation 5030 of March 10, 1983; or (c) impairs the determination, in accordance with international law, of any maritime boundary of the United States with a foreign jurisdiction.

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

S WILLIAM J. CLINTON