

VETO OF H.R. 2707

MESSAGE

FROM

THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

TRANSMITTING

HIS VETO OF H.R. 2707, THE "DEPARTMENTS OF LABOR, HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, AND EDUCATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1992"



NOVEMBER 19, 1991.—Message and accompanying papers referred to the Committee on Appropriations and ordered to be printed

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To the House of Representatives:

I am returning herewith without my approval H.R. 2707, the "Department of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 1992."

H.R. 2707 contains a provision that would prohibit implementation of rules related to the Title X family planning program and abortion. I am therefore compelled to disapprove H.R. 2707. I will sign a bill that does not include language that prohibits implementation of the abortion counseling and referral rule.

I have informed the Congress on numerous occasions that, consistent with the intent of the statute originally establishing Title X, I would veto any legislation that would entangle Title X with abortion. Accordingly, it is my intention to ensure that no Federal funds are used to support abortion except in cases where the life of the mother would be endangered if the fetus were carried to term.

Under the regulations upheld by the Supreme Court, pregnant women who seek services from projects funded by Title X are appropriately referred to qualified providers for prenatal care and other social services, including counseling. The Administration seeks to ensure the integrity of Title X as a prepregnancy family planning program and to ensure that women who are pregnant, or have a medical problem, are referred to providers who can ensure continuity of care. We do not seek to limit in any way the counseling pregnant receive when they seek services from those providers.

In a memorandum to Secretary Sullivan on November 5, 1991, I reiterated my commitment to preserving the confidentiality of the doctor/patient relationship and seeing that the operation of the Title X family planning program is compatible with free speech and the highest standards of medical care. My memorandum makes clear that there is no "gag rule" to interfere with the doctor/patient relationship. I have directed that in implementing these regulations, nothing prevent a woman from receiving complete medical information about her condition from a physician. There can be no doubt that my Administration is committed to the protection of free speech. The United States Supreme Court specifically found that the regulations in no way violate free speech rights.

H.R. 2707 contains several provisions that would delay the obligation of over \$4.4 billion until the last few weeks of FY 1992 and early FY 1993. The magnitude of the delays contained in H.R. 2707 would make it much more difficult to remain within the FY 1993 spending limits required by the Budget Enforcement Act.

I urge the Congress to pass promptly an acceptable bill, one without objectionable language relating to Title X, to provide needed

funding for the many important programs contained in this legislation.

GEORGE BUSH.

THE WHITE HOUSE, *November 19, 1991.*