

VETO OF  
SIKES ACT AMENDMENTS OF 1978

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MESSAGE

FROM

**THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES**

VETOING

H.R. 10882, AN ACT TO AUTHORIZE APPROPRIATIONS TO CARRY  
OUT CONSERVATION PROGRAMS ON MILITARY RESERVATIONS  
AND PUBLIC LANDS DURING FISCAL YEARS 1979, 1980, AND 1981



JULY 11, 1978.—Message and accompanying act referred to the  
Committee on Merchant Marine and Fisheries  
and ordered to be printed

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WASHINGTON : 1978

*To the House of Representatives:*

I am returning without my approval H.R. 10882, the "Sikes Act Amendments of 1978."

The Sikes Act authorizes Federal-State cooperative programs for fish and wildlife conservation and public outdoor recreation on military reservations, National Forests, National Aeronautics and Space Administration sites, and certain Energy and Interior Department lands. It is intended to foster cooperation between the States and Federal land management agencies. H.R. 10882 would extend and increase appropriation authorizations under the Act through 1981.

I am strongly committed to the wise management and conservation of fish and wildlife on public lands; I have recommended appropriations of approximately \$35 million for fish and wildlife management on public lands subject to the Sikes Act. This total includes nearly \$14.4 million for Federal/State cooperative programs of the type authorized by that Act, programs I believe are valuable and important.

However, these amendments are objectionable in two respects. First, the bill would more than double the current appropriation authorizations for Sikes Act programs—from \$23.5 million in 1978 to \$51 million in 1979, and \$61 million in 1980 and 1981. These funds would be in addition to authorizations under other, more general, land management programs which are now used for carrying out most Sikes Act activities. I insist on adequate attention to the management of fish and wildlife resources on public lands, but the appropriations for these programs must be determined in the context of an effective and efficient management program encompassing all public land resources. These amendments provide unneeded authorization levels for Sikes Act programs.

Second, and more importantly, I object to the requirement in H.R. 10882 that directs the Secretaries of the Interior, Agriculture, and Defense to report to congressional authorizing committees whenever the President's budget request for Sikes Act activities is less than the amount authorized, and requires them to state specifically why the higher amount was not requested. This requirement is designed to bring pressure on the administration to seek separate additional funds for Sikes Act programs and invites agencies to undercut the President's annual budget he has presented to the Congress. This is an unacceptable intrusion on the President's obligations and authority as Chief Executive. This approach would limit the President's ability to make his annual budget recommendations a positive, comprehensive, and balanced statement of the Administration's policies and budget priorities.

Disapproval of H.R. 10882 will not affect planned Federal expenditures for fish and wildlife management on public lands for 1979 which may be carried out under other more general land management authorities. This administration will continue to move vigorously ahead in cooperation with the States to implement programs for the conservation and enhancement of fish and wildlife on public lands.

JIMMY CARTER.

THE WHITE HOUSE, *July 10, 1978.*