

\$50,000 death benefit to Federal firefighters and law enforcement officers because the benefits provided under FECA are comparatively generous and would in many cases exceed the \$50,000 payment authorized for State-local public safety officers.

Although the costs entailed in H.R. 5888 are not large, the special treatment provided by the bill would inevitably set a precedent for extension of its benefits to other, if not all, Federal employees who die in the line of duty. This would result in an unwarranted and costly added burden on the taxpayers of this Nation.

Finally, the retroactive provision in the bill is objectionable by arbitrarily excluding employees whose deaths occurred before the effective date.

For all of these reasons, I cannot approve H.R. 5888.

JIMMY CARTER.

THE WHITE HOUSE, December 23, 1980.

H.R. 4386

MEMORANDUM OF DISAPPROVAL

I am withholding my approval from H.R. 4386, a bill "For the relief of Mr. and Mrs. Clarence Oveson."

H.R. 4386 would direct the Secretary of the Treasury to pay \$50,000 to Mr. and Mrs. Clarence Oveson of Saint Louis and Koochiching Counties, Minnesota. The payment would be for full settlement of the Oveson's claims arising from the assumption of management by the United States of certain real property owned by the United States but occupied by the Ovesons. The payment would not affect any claims that the Ovesons might have arising from the loss of any structures affixed to the land. The Ovesons apparently purchased the land in question from another individual in good faith though title to the land actually rests with the U.S. Government as part of the Voyageurs National Park.

I am withholding my approval from H.R. 4386 because it would provide compensation to individuals who have occupied Federal lands without authority. Approval of this legislation would set a precedent of rewarding unauthorized users of Federal lands. It would not only undermine ongoing efforts by all Federal land management agencies to eliminate such uses but could also invite additional unauthorized use.

While I sympathize with the plight of the Ovesons, I cannot support the payment of taxpayers' funds to them to remedy a problem they have with other private individuals in a situation in which the United States Government was in no way at fault. I understand that there may be legal remedies available to the Ovesons against the person who improperly sold them land to which he did not have clear title.

JIMMY CARTER.

THE WHITE HOUSE, December 24, 1980.

H.R. 6257

MEMORANDUM OF DISAPPROVAL

I am withholding my approval of H.R. 6257, a bill to authorize the Secretary of Agriculture to convey certain National Forest System lands and for other pur-

poses. As originally introduced in Congress, this was a noncontroversial bill providing a simplified procedure for conveying small parcels of land within the National Forest System. Sections one through seven of the bill would accomplish this purpose. However, during the closing hours of the 96th Congress, a new section 8 was added that would adversely affect the Alaska Railroad, an agency of the Department of Transportation.

Section 8 would require the Secretary of Transportation to issue regulations for the rental of Alaska Railroad lands under terms that would result in a loss of revenue to the Railroad, provide for inequitable treatment of different tenants, and create a complicated method for determining rents that would be extremely difficult to administer. It would further delay the Railroad's effort to raise its lease land rents to fair market value, and it would lock into statute past practices that have been criticized by the General Accounting Office and the Department of Transportation. It would also inhibit the Railroad's ability to establish a modern lease land development program consistent with normal commercial practice.

The Railroad is operated as a self-sustaining business by the Federal Government, to the benefit of the State of Alaska and its citizens. Rental income from rail lands is used to pay part of its operating costs. The loss of revenue resulting from this bill may force the Railroad to curtail service or require a new federal operating subsidy to make up the difference. A curtailment of service would injure those shippers and residents of Alaska who use the Railroad, and an increase in federal funds for the Railroad is unacceptable.

For these reasons, I am vetoing H.R. 6257. However, I support those provisions in the bill that would give the Secretary of Agriculture authority to dispose of small tracts of National Forest lands that have become difficult to administer efficiently. This authority, which the Department of Agriculture has been seeking for several years, would greatly facilitate the disposal of approximately 200,000 acres of National Forest lands that present special management problems and would eliminate the need for a case-by-case authorization from the Congress before such lands can be sold or exchanged. Therefore, I urge the 97th Congress to enact similar authority early next year.

JIMMY CARTER.

THE WHITE HOUSE, December 23, 1980.

RESIGNATION FROM THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

The SPEAKER received the following resignation from the House of Representatives:

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, D.C. December 18, 1980.

The Honorable BRENDAN T. BYRNE,
Office of the Governor,
Executive State House,
Trenton, N.J.

DEAR GOVERNOR BYRNE: In accordance with the law, I hereby resign as the Representa-

tive of the Fourth District of New Jersey effective midnight, December 29, 1980.

Sincerely yours,

FRANK THOMPSON, Jr.

Copies: Hon. Edmund L. Henshaw, Jr., Clerk of the U.S. House of Representatives; Hon. Benjamin J. Guthrie, Sergeant at Arms; Hon. Thomas P. O'Neill, Jr., Speaker of the House.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

[Pursuant to the order of the House on Dec. 4, 1980, the following report was filed on Dec. 19, 1980]

Mr. BROOKS: Committee on Government Operations. Report on Veterans Administration pays scant thought to Medicaid computer needs (Rept. No. 96-1538). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

Mr. DELLUMS: Committee on the District of Columbia. Activities and summary report of the Committee on the District of Columbia (Rept. No. 96-1539). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

[Pursuant to the order of the House on Dec. 16, 1980, the following report was filed on Dec. 22, 1980]

Mr. BROOKS: Committee on Government Operations. Report on the Government's classification of private ideas (Rept. No. 96-1540). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

[Pursuant to the order of the House on Dec. 4, 1980, the following report was filed on Dec. 22, 1980]

Mr. BROOKS: Committee on Government Operations. Report on allocation of budget totals by program (Rept. No. 96-1541). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

Mr. SMITH of Iowa: Committee on Small Business. Report on summary of activities of the Committee on Small Business, 96th Congress (Rept. No. 96-1542). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

[Pursuant to the order of the House on Dec. 4, 1980, the following report was filed on Dec. 29, 1980]

Mr. HANLEY: Committee on Post Office and Civil Service. Report pursuant to Section 302(b) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (Rept. No. 96-1544). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

Mr. GAIJMO: Committee on the Budget. Report on activities of the Committee on the Budget, 96th Congress (Rept. No. 96-1545). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

Mr. PERKINS: Committee on Education and Labor. Report on the activities of the Committee on Education and Labor during the 96th Congress (Rept. No. 96-1546). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

Mr. WOLFF: Select Committee on Narcotics Abuse and Control. Annual report for the year 1980 of the Select Committee on Narcotics Abuse and Control (Rept. No. 96-1547). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

Mr. BENNETT: Committee on Standards of Official Conduct. Report on activities of the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct during the 96th Congress (Rept. No. 96-1548). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.