2. We are engaged in a major review of national energy policies. Unnecessary restrictions on coal production would limit our Nation's freedom to adopt the best energy options.
3. The United States uses the equivalent of 4 barrels of expensive foreign oil for every ton of unproduced domestic coal—a situation which cannot long be tolerated without continued, serious economic consequences. This bill would exacerbate this problem.
4. Unemployment would increase in both the coal fields and in those industries unable to obtain alternative fuel.

In addition, S. 425 provides for excessive Federal expenditures and would clearly have an inflationary impact on the economy. Moreover, it contains numerous other deficiencies which have recently been addressed in Executive Branch communications to the Congress concerning this legislation.

In sum, I find that the adverse impact of this bill on our domestic coal production is unacceptable at a time when the Nation can ill afford significant losses from this critical energy resource. It would also further complicate our battle against inflation. Accordingly, I am withholding my approval from S. 425.

In doing so, I am truly disappointed and sympathetic with those in Congress who have labored so hard to come up with a good bill. We must continue to strive diligently to ensure that laws and regulations are in effect which establish environmental protection and reclamation requirements appropriately balanced against the Nation's need for increased coal production. This will continue to be my Administration's goal in the new year.

H.R. 17085

MEMORANDUM OF DISAPPROVAL

I have withheld my approval from H.R. 17085, a bill that would amend Title VIII of the Public Health Service Act to provide support for the training of nurses.

This measure would authorize excessive appropriations levels—more than $650 million over the three fiscal years covered by the bill. Such high Federal spending for nursing education would be intolerable at a time when even high priority activities are being pressed to justify their existence.

I believe nurses have played and will continue to play an invaluable role in the delivery of health services. The Federal taxpayer can and should selectively assist nursing schools to achieve educational reforms and innovations in support of that objective. The Administration's 1976 budget request will include funds for this purpose. Furthermore, I intend to urge the 94th Congress to enact comprehensive health personnel training legislation that will permit support of nurse training initiatives to meet the new problems of the 1970's.

This act inappropriately proposes large amounts of student and construction support for schools of nursing. Without any additional Federal stimulation, we expect that the number of active duty registered nurses will increase by over 50 percent during this decade.

Such an increase suggests that our incentives for expansion have been successful, and that continuation of the current Federal program is likely to be of less benefit to the Nation than using these scarce resources in other ways. One result of this expansion has been scattered but persistent reports of registered nurse unemployment particularly among graduates of associate degree training programs.

Today's very different outlook is not reflected in this bill. We must concentrate Federal efforts on the shortage of certain nurse specialists, and persistent geographic maldistribution. However, this proposal would allocate less than one-third of its total authorization to these problems. Morever, it fails to come to grips with the problem of geographic maldistribution.

Support for innovative projects—involving the health professions, nursing, allied health, and public health—should be contained in a single piece of legislation to assure that decisions made in one sector relate to decisions made in another, and to advance the concept of an integrated health service delivery team. By separating out nursing from other health personnel categories, this bill would perpetuate what has in the past been a fragmented approach.

The enrolled bill would also extend various special nursing student assistance provisions of current law. Nursing students are overwhelmingly undergraduates, and as such should be—and are—entitled to the same types of student assistance available generally under the Office of Education's programs for postsecondary education. These include, in particular, guaranteed loans and basic educational opportunity grants for financially hard-pressed students. Categorical nursing student assistance activities are not appropriate and should be phased out, as the Administration has proposed.

S. 4206

MEMORANDUM OF DISAPPROVAL

I am withholding my approval from S. 4206, entitled "an act to provide price support for milk at not less than 85 percentum of the parity price therefor, and for other purposes."

This bill would require an immediate increase of $1.12 per hundredweight in the support price for milk, to a record high $7.69. Thereafter, through March 31, 1976, further upward adjustments would be required every three months as necessary to reflect changes in the parity index and parity price for milk.

Such large increases in milk prices to producers would be highly inflationary to consumers and unnecessary. The initial increase alone would raise fluid milk prices to consumers by about 6 cents per half gallon of milk and require increasing CCC's purchase price for cheese, and subsequently market prices, 11 or 12 cents per pound. Correspondingly large increases in the support purchase prices for butter and nonfat dry milk also would be required to carry out the higher support price for milk.

These significantly higher prices would be inconsistent with the Administration's continued and concerted efforts to combat inflation and its serious effects on the Nation's economy. Moreover, such prices would ultimately be damaging to the dairy industry and milk producers.

Consumers are resisting prices they must now pay for milk and other dairy products. To artificially force prices still higher, as this legislation would do, would result in further declines in consumption and be a strong stimulus to excess milk production.

To further reduce the demand for milk and dairy products by the increased prices provided in this legislation would be detrimental to the dairy industry. A dairy farmer cannot be well served by Government action that prices his product out of the market. It also would be detrimental since the Government would be required to buy the large surpluses of manufactured dairy products which this legislation would generate. This would cost taxpayers more than $400 million during the life of the bill.

It is clearly in the best interests of producers, consumers, taxpayers, and the Government that this legislation not be signed into law.

H.R. 2933

MEMORANDUM OF DISAPPROVAL

I am withholding my approval from H.R. 2933, a bill which would amend the Agricultural Marketing Agreement Act to make existing grade and quality restrictions on certain imported commodities applicable to imported filberts.

In my judgment, the bill would be unfair to the American consumer and the American farmer, as well as prejudicial to the interests of American trade policy.

H.R. 2933 would be unfair to the consumer because it could unnecessarily increase prices for filbert products. Existing law already requires all imported foodstuffs to meet health standards prescribed under the Food and Drug Act.

The bill could also produce unfair consequences for the farmer by causing the loss of some of his important markets abroad. It could result at best in comparatively limited benefits for domestic producers while risking retaliation from abroad against the larger volume of other products exported by our farmers.

Finally, the bill would be prejudicial to our trade policy because it would be inconsistent with our obligations under the General Agreements on Tariffs and Trade. It would erect a non-tariff trade barrier at a time when we are trying to persuade other nations to dismantle theirs.

Although there are other commodities which are subject to the same statutory restrictions that H.R. 2933 would impose on filberts, no new commodities have been included in that list since January of 1971. I cannot in good conscience support the addition of a new commodity just after signing into law the new Trade