

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. Moreover, 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 post-secondary 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 percent 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 non-fat 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

Act which has a major aim of eliminating non-tariff trade barriers.

For the foregoing reasons, I am compelled to withhold my approval from H.R. 2933.

H.R. 11897

MEMORANDUM OF DISAPPROVAL

I have today vetoed H.R. 11897, a bill which would name the United States Courthouse and Federal Office Building in Grand Rapids, Michigan, the "President Gerald R. Ford Federal Office Building."

Although I appreciate the honor expressed by the Congress in enacting this legislation, I intend to continue the policy of past Administrations that the executive branch not endorse the naming of Federal office buildings. Generally, the executive branch has deferred to the desires of the Congress on such matters.

However, I know of no Federal office buildings that have been named for a President while still in office. This legislation might begin a precedent I believe it best not to establish.

The proposed naming of this facility for me in my home community is a great honor, and one for which I am deeply grateful; however, for the reasons I have assigned above I feel I cannot sign H.R. 11897.

H.R. 13296

MEMORANDUM OF DISAPPROVAL

I am withholding my approval from H.R. 13296, a bill to authorize appropriations for the Maritime Administration.

This is the annual appropriations authorization bill for certain activities of the Maritime Administration in the Department of Commerce. I would be pleased to approve the measure if it were limited to those authorizations.

Unfortunately, the Congress added an unacceptable amendment which would require the Federal Government to reimburse U.S. flag fishing vessel owners for damage to their equipment by foreign flag ships.

The amendment would require the Secretary of Commerce to provide interest free loans to fishermen to cover the property and the value of produce lost as a result of damage caused by foreign vessels operating in the area of the U.S. Continental Shelf. If an ensuing investigation proved the loss was caused solely by a foreign ship, the loan repayment would be canceled and the United States would attempt to recover claims from the government of the foreign national involved. The program would be retroactive to January 1, 1972, for claims already filed.

This indemnity program would pose serious problems of administration because it would be difficult to establish responsibility for any damage caused. Furthermore, since the bill provides no basis for advance review of the recipient's financial ability to repay a loan the Commerce Department could find itself in the position of holding a group of bad debts. At the same time, claims for damage would be difficult to validate and the result would essentially be a grant program with few effective restraints.

Moreover, this program sets a precedent for the Federal relief of private parties from the actions of foreign nationals. Currently, relief is extended only to fishermen whose vessels are the victims of actions by foreign governments beyond recognized territorial limits. International procedures now exist through which claims against foreign nationals can be asserted and adjudicated and these should be used in preference to a Federal indemnity program.

I urge the Congress to pass once again the appropriations authorizations provisions of the bill early in the next session. Meanwhile, the programs covered by these authorizations and funded by appropriations already enacted can be continued under the continuing resolution which runs through February 28, 1975.

S. 3943

MEMORANDUM OF DISAPPROVAL

I am withholding my approval from S. 3943, a bill "to extend the time for using funds appropriated to carry out the 1973 Rural Environmental Assistance Program and the 1974 Rural Environmental Conservation Program."

The bill would extend from December 31, 1974, to December 31, 1975, the time within which farmers may request and receive approval of cost-sharing assistance under the 1973 Rural Environmental Assistance Program (REAP) and the 1974 Rural Environmental Conservation Program (RECP). In total, this bill would make \$125,000,000 available to farmers for water and soil conservation practices which would otherwise not be available beyond December 31, 1974.

In my judgment, this bill is not necessary because sufficient cost-share funds have been made available for producers to finance sound conservation practices. Those producers interested in these programs have had adequate time to request and receive approval of these cost-share funds by the end of December 1974. I understand that those farmers, who have started approved conservation practices during the allotted time and were unable to complete them because of weather or other uncontrollable circumstances, will be permitted to complete these practices and receive cost-sharing assistance during 1975.

This Administration shares the view that REAP and RECP have made important contributions to conservation and the rural environment. However, the programs have long ago achieved their objectives. These programs were initiated in the 1930's to supplement farmers' incomes and provide incentives to farmers to install soil and water conservation practices. They were successful in demonstrating the value of conservation as a good farming practice. Many of the practices supported by the programs are profitable without Federal assistance and the supplementary income from this source has diminished in importance at a time when net farm income is near an all-time high.

It is, therefore, my earnest opinion that this bill is both unnecessary and unjustified, and on that basis I withhold my approval.

S. 3341

MEMORANDUM OF DISAPPROVAL

I have withheld my approval from S. 3341, the "Travel Expenses Amendments Act of 1974."

This bill would raise the maximum per diem allowance and mileage rates for civilian Government employees traveling on official business. I endorse this proposal. Unfortunately, a provision was added to the bill which would establish a rigid system of mileage reimbursement to the disabled veteran—with no discretionary authority for payment of a lesser amount where justified when the veteran was authorized to travel for treatment.

This provision assumes that there are great similarities in the travel situations of Veterans Administration beneficiaries and Federal employees who are away from home on Government business. This is not the case, however. Generally, a short span of time and distance is involved in VA beneficiary travel to a facility for vocational rehabilitation, counseling and health care, while Government employees may be traveling for days or weeks at a time. The employee per diem is designed to pay for necessary living expenses during this period, including those of lodging and meals.

Under this bill, Government employees using their privately owned vehicles may be reimbursed at the minimum 15¢ per mile, or at a rate comparable to the cost to the Government if the employee used a Government-owned vehicle. This flexibility would be continued for Government employee travel under the bill passed by the Congress. However, such management flexibility would not be applicable to travel of VA beneficiaries. The result would be the required payment of unwarranted mileage rates that would add an estimated \$25 million a year to the VA budget.

The Administration will ask the 94th Congress for a new bill to raise the maximum per diem and mileage rates for Federal employees which have been inadequate for some time. Many Federal employees who are required to travel in connection with their work have suffered considerable out-of-pocket expenses in recent years. This should be rectified as soon as possible.

GERALD R. FORD.

THE WHITE HOUSE.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PRIVATE 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:

[Submitted Dec. 30, 1974]

Mr. EVINS of Tennessee: Select Committee on Small Business. Energy data requirements of the Federal Government (Rept. No. 93-1648). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

Mr. HOLIFIELD: Committee on Government Operations. Reducing abuses in proprietary vocational education (Rept. No. 93-1649). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

Mr. HOLIFIELD: Committee on Government Operations. Impact of heroin addiction on the criminal justice system (Rept. No.