

Automobile Prices

Statement by the President on the Rescission of Price Increases by Manufacturers. August 17, 1971

In announcing that their previously announced price increases for 1972 models would be rescinded, the Nation's automobile manufacturers have acted with a laudable respect for the national interest, and with a high sense of responsibility.

This action demonstrates dramatically a spirit of voluntary cooperation in making the wage-price freeze work. With this spirit, and with all Americans pulling together, we can break the back of inflation and set the Nation securely on the path of a new prosperity.

Disaster Assistance for Maryland

Announcement of Disaster Declaration and Authorization of Federal Assistance for Repair of Damage Caused by Storms and Flooding. August 17, 1971

The President today declared a major disaster for Maryland authorizing the use of Federal funds to supplement State and local resources for relief measures after severe storms and flooding occurred in Baltimore city and six adjacent counties in Maryland. The President acted at the request of Governor Marvin Mandel.

Today's action by the President makes available Federal funds for individual assistance, debris clearance, restoration of publicly-owned sewer and water systems, repair or restoration of roads, streets, and bridges, and other public property damaged by the flooding.

The Office of Emergency Preparedness regional staff in Olney, Md., under Regional Director Robert C. Stevens is coordinating the Federal response and administering the President's funds allocated to this disaster.

Bill To Provide Increased Retirement Benefits to Totally Disabled District of Columbia Policemen and Firemen

The President's Memorandum of Disapproval. August 17, 1971

I am today withholding my approval of H.R. 2600, which would increase the retirement benefits of former members of the District of Columbia Police and Fire

departments, the U.S. Park Police, the Executive Protective Service and the U.S. Secret Service who retired prior to October 1, 1956, with service-incurred disabilities rated at 100 percent.

Bills with somewhat similar objectives were vetoed by President Eisenhower in 1959 and by President Kennedy in 1961. This particular bill has been opposed by the D.C. Government in Senate hearings. After reviewing the merits, I am vetoing H.R. 2600 because I believe it is inconsistent with essential standards of fairness and impartiality toward other District Government employees.

H.R. 2600 would grant an unwarranted benefit to a small, special group of retirees. These former employees already receive annuity increases substantially above those of other District employees. Furthermore, under their retirement system, retired D.C. policemen and firemen automatically obtain an increase in annuities proportionate to any increases in the pay of active-duty policemen and firemen. As a result, some of the retirees who would benefit from this bill already receive a larger annuity than the salaries they received when they were on active duty.

H.R. 2600 would not only increase the disparity between the group affected and other District Government employees, but would also create a new disparity within the police and firemen's retirement system by singling out one select group and ignoring other employees who retired prior to October 1, 1956, with less than 100% disability.

I am also seriously concerned that this bill would establish an unfortunate precedent for other retirees under the D.C. Policemen and Firemen's Retirement System, and also for those under other District of Columbia and Federal retirement systems.

All of us can be proud of the outstanding services which the District of Columbia's police and firemen have performed over the years. They deserve a just reward for their work, and today their disability and retirement benefit system is one of the finest and most generous in the country. It would not be in the public interest, however, to create special benefits for a small group of these men which would be unfair to the many other deserving persons in District Government.

RICHARD NIXON

The White House
August 17, 1971

Knights of Columbus

The President's Remarks to the 89th Annual International Meeting of the Knights of Columbus in New York City. August 17, 1971

Supreme Knight John McDevitt, Your Eminence Cardinal Cooke, Mr. Attorney General, Mr. Secretary of