

Capital region a better place to live and work and visit.

I am especially pleased to approve the National Capital Area Transit Act of 1972. Nothing is more essential in making a city livable than a regional transportation system which enables people to move easily among their homes, their places of employment, their leisure time pursuits and tourist attractions. During the last 4 years, Washington has taken long strides toward the development of such a system. Construction of METRO rapid rail transit system is progressing well, as is the improvement of the regional highway system. The transit act signed today is a necessary complement to these steps. It opens the way for acquisition of the area's four major bus companies by the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, and thus for the efficient coordination of bus and subway services when METRO begins operation in 1974.

I also join with the local community in welcoming the Dwight D. Eisenhower Memorial Bicentennial Civic Center Act. This new center and the activities it will host can serve as a catalyst for the revitalization of the downtown heart of the National Capital region. Thanks to the prompt action of the Congress on this bill, it should be possible to have the center open and operating by the 1976 Bicentennial year—a fitting memorial to the late President Eisenhower.

Another important measure which I have long supported and will happily sign is the Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corporation Act of 1972. This legislation will be of great assistance in the planning and development of the avenue, blending governmental and private uses to create an impressive and active main street for the Federal City.

While the civic center and Pennsylvania Avenue bills contain provisions which raise constitutional issues, I believe that those issues can be worked out satisfactorily with the Congress as we proceed to implement this legislation.

The three other measures which I have signed today are also important to the citizens of Washington. Under the District of Columbia Implied Consent Act, the city obtains a long-needed mechanism, already held by every other jurisdiction in the Nation, for dealing more effectively with the serious public safety hazards caused by drinking drivers. The District of Columbia Teachers' Salary Act amendments of 1972 recognizes the need of adequately compensating public servants for the demanding and important work they do. The equal rights for blind and physically disabled act raises the standard of justice and opportunity for handicapped persons in the District of Columbia.

Sometimes it is difficult to know at close range whether the city's tribulations with excavated streets, barricaded construction sites, community disputes, and the like indicate progress or merely confusion. But a major legislative achievement like that represented by these six bills offers heartening proof that the system does work and that a better day is coming for all the people of the National

Capital region. I commend the bipartisan effort in the Congress, and the constructive cooperation of Federal and local officials and concerned citizens, which made this possible and which points to more progress in the future.

NOTE: Five of the six bills were approved by the President on October 21, 1972, as follows:

- S. 4062, National Capital Area Transit Act of 1972—Public Law 92-517
- S. 3943, Dwight D. Eisenhower Memorial Bicentennial Civic Center Act—Public Law 92-520
- S. 4059, District of Columbia Implied Consent Act—Public Law 92-519
- H.R. 15965, concerning District of Columbia teachers' salaries and retirement benefits—Public Law 92-518
- H.R. 11032, concerning equal rights for the blind and physically disabled in the District of Columbia—Public Law 92-515

The sixth bill to which the statement refers is:

- H.R. 10751, Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corporation Act of 1972

National Environmental Data System and Environmental Centers Act of 1972

The President's Memorandum of Disapproval. October 21, 1972

I am withholding my approval from H.R. 56.

My objections to this bill are centered upon two of its titles which would establish a National Environmental Data System and create environmental centers in each State. While both of these titles sound desirable in theory, they would in reality lead to the duplication of information or would produce results unrelated to real needs and wasteful of talent, resources, and the taxpayers' money.

A third portion of H.R. 56 would direct the Federal Government to purchase the Klamath Indian Forest lands in Oregon. After studying this proposal carefully, I believe this purchase would be sound public policy, and if the next Congress provides the necessary funds, I shall happily approve the acquisition of these unique lands.

In the form now before me, Title I of this legislation calls for the establishment of an independent, centralized environmental data system for the acquisition, storage and dissemination of information relating to the environment. Data for the system would come from governmental, international and private sources. A Director, who would be under the guidance of the Council on Environmental Quality, would determine what data would actually be placed in the system and who would have access to the data.

I believe there are serious drawbacks to such a data system which would outweigh potential benefits. The collection of data and statistics on the supposition that some day they may be useful is in itself a highly dubious exercise. Data, taken out of the context of the questions they were

specifically designed to answer, can even contribute to confusion or be misleading.

With this in mind, I believe the centralized collection of environmental data should be related to specific policies and programs. H.R. 56 fails to provide such a relationship and the question of whether this basic deficiency can be overcome, and a useful centralized system designed, is now under study by the Administration. In the meantime, the Environmental Protection Agency and other agencies have consistently worked to strengthen the acquisition and exchange of such data and this effort will continue.

Title II of this legislation authorizes the establishment of environmental centers in every State to conduct research in pollution, natural resource management, and other local, State or regional problems. The centers would also train environmental professionals and carry out a comprehensive education program.

Research is a vital part of our effort to come to grips with the environmental problems we face. This Administration is currently spending literally hundreds of millions of dollars through directed research efforts sponsored by the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of the Interior, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the Department of Agriculture, and the Department of Health, Education and Welfare—to name but a few. We will continue these programs and institute others where they are needed.

Academic talent and resources have a vital role to play in the success of our environmental research programs. As members of the academic community know, grants for research are awarded on the basis of not only the merits of the project, but also the capabilities of the institution to carry out its responsibilities. By creating research centers on a rigid State-by-State basis, and requiring that each be funded, the Congress is asking us to throw away our priorities and to fund programs regardless of their merits and in spite of the limited capabilities of some institutions. Equally important, this approach also ignores the competence and available capacity of already existing institutions and laboratories to carry out this vital research.

Further, I share the view of the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency that environmental problems are essentially national in scope, and that most problems, even though they may appear to be local in nature, really affect many other States and localities as well. To the extent there may be local problems, our present project-by-project approach in research can be used to marshal the best scientific talents, wherever they are located, to deal with such problems. Thus, there is clearly no justification for establishing up to 51 new environmental centers specifically charged with investigation of State and local environmental problems.

Titles III and IV of the bill direct the Secretary of Agriculture to purchase a tract of 113,000 acres in the Klamath Indian Forest in Oregon. I believe that acquisition of this forest area would mark a significant and worth-

while addition to our National Forest System while, at the same time, assuring full environmental protection to this scenic part of Oregon.

RICHARD NIXON

The White House,
October 21, 1972.

Federal Environmental Pesticide Control Act of 1972

Statement by the President Upon Signing the Bill Into Law. October 21, 1972

While pesticides have been regulated by Federal law since 1910, it was not until after World War II that they began to be used in large volumes for a great variety of purposes. Since that time, the use of pesticides has become one of the major reasons for the tremendous growth of American agriculture, helping our farmers to provide sufficient food and fiber for this Nation and for much of the world.

But even though pesticides have greatly aided our agricultural productivity, they can also present serious problems. For if they are not used properly and prudently, they can be damaging to the natural environment and harmful to human beings.

As part of my environmental message of February 1971, I proposed that the Congress—for the first time—give the Federal Government authority to regulate effectively the use of all pesticides in the United States. I am pleased that this recommendation has received the diligent, conscientious consideration of the Congress and especially of the House and Senate Agriculture Committees and the Senate Commerce Committee. The legislation which has emerged after this consideration is as strong and workable as my original proposal. I take great pleasure in signing it into law today.

The act I sign today represents the most significant legislation in this field since the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act was passed in 1947. That law required the registration of pesticides but it did not address the problem of misusing properly registered pesticides and it did not control pesticides which moved solely in intrastate commerce. The new law remedies these defects. It prohibits the use of any pesticide inconsistent with its labeling, it extends Federal regulation to all pesticides including those distributed or used within a single State, and it takes a number of additional important steps to improve and strengthen the regulatory process.

As a result of this new law, the Federal Government, for the first time, will be able to exercise adequate control over the use of pesticides. We will now be able to ensure that we can continue to reap the benefits which these