H.R. 6028. An act making appropriations for the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and related agencies, for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1985, and for other purposes;

H.R. 6163. An act to amend title 28, United States Code, with respect to the assumption of selected functions, programs, and resources of St. Elizabeths Hospital by the District of Columbia, to provide for the establishment of a comprehensive mental health care system in the District of Columbia, and for other purposes;

H.R. 6224. An act to provide for the establishment of a comprehensive national mental health care system in the District of Columbia, and for other purposes;

H.R. 6342. An act to approve governing declarations of disapproval as follows:


H.R. 6248. An act to appro

H.R. 6248. An act to appro

MEMORANDUM OF DISAPPROVAL


H.R. 723

MEMORANDUM OF DISAPPROVAL

I am withholding my approval of H.R. 723, a private bill for the relief of Marsha D. Christopher, a Postal Service worker. I sympathize with Mrs. Christopher. The on-the-job injury to her resulting from an attack by a dog was severe, but I believe that enactment of this bill would set an undesirable and potentially costly precedent and would discriminate unfairly against the thousands of other postal workers and Federal employees who also incur job-related injuries.

Mrs. Christopher has received the benefits allowed to Federal workers injured on the job as provided by the Federal Employees' Compensation Act (FECA). The bill would waive the subrogation provisions of FECA, thus enabling Mrs. Christopher to receive and retain FECA benefits in addition to money recovered by her as the result of her private settlement with the owner of the dog. This would undermine the primary purpose of the subrogation provisions of the Act, which is to place the cost of compensation on the person or persons responsible for the injury and to relieve the taxpayer of this expense.

RONALD REAGAN.


H.R. 999

MEMORANDUM OF DISAPPROVAL

I am withholding my approval from H.R. 999, the “American Conservation Corps Act of 1984.” This legislation would establish, within the Departments of Agriculture and the Interior, conservation-related employment programs for youths.

The programs that H.R. 999 would in effect reestablish—the Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) and the Young Adult Conservation Corps (YACC)—were terminated by Congress at my recommendation because they had proven to be costly and unnecessary. The American Conservation Corps (ACC) would duplicate other efforts for youth financed by the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA), such as the Job Corps, JTPA State Block Grants, and the Summer Youth program. In fiscal year 1985, the Federal Government will spend nearly $2.2 billion on these programs, which will train about 1.5 million people. This training is done at a much lower per capita cost than would be the case under the ACC, and is much more likely to result in permanent private sector jobs for their graduates because they involve the private sector in job training.
The ACC, however, would be based on the accredited approach to youth unemployment that relies on artificial public sector employment, just as did the Public Service Employment program operated under the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act until it was terminated by Congress in 1982.

Moreover, the ACC is not a necessary or effective way of managing Federal lands. The Federal Government currently spends over $4 billion annually on land management. This amount is adequate to fund all activities needed to ensure the preservation of these precious resources for this and future generations of Americans. Any conservation project that could be performed by the ACC could be done better and for less money under existing programs, because of less overhead for residential centers and the greater productivity of existing workers who are already well trained. In addition, I have recently signed S. 864, which would expand the National Park Service's volunteer program, and allow such programs to be established in the Bureau of Land Management. Under these worthwhile programs, including those administered by the Forest Service and the Fish and Wildlife Service, citizens offer valuable volunteer services to assist the Departments of Agriculture and the Interior in the management of Federal lands.

Finally, while the three year, $225 million ACC authorization is itself unwarranted, it would almost certainly grow. The Youth Conservation Corps began in 1971 as a $1 million pilot program, and was subsequently given a permanent authorization of $60 million annually, notwithstanding its inability to provide enduring, meaningful benefits for the trainees or the public. Moreover, the proponents of the ACC have already served notice that they will attempt to get the next Congress to increase the ACC authorization to $300 million annually.

I believe that America's unemployed youth would be better served by reducing Federal spending, so that more resources are available to the private sector of our economy to fuel a continuation of the current economic expansion that has added 6 million new jobs to the workforce over the last two years. If given the opportunity, the private sector is much more likely to offer young people promising career opportunities than temporary make-work Federal job programs such as the American Conservation Corps.

RONALD REAGAN.
H.R. 5172
MEMORANDUM OF DISAPPROVAL
I am withholding my approval of H.R. 5172, which includes the "National Bureau of Standards Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1985" (Title I), clarifications of the role of the National Science Foundation in engineering research and education (Title II), and the "Manufacturing Sciences and Robotics Research and Development Act of 1984" (Title III). Title I would, among other things, authorize appropriations for certain Department of Commerce programs for fiscal year 1983, for which appropriations have already been enacted.

Title III of H.R. 5172 would establish a new program providing Federal financial support for a variety of research, development, education, and training activities, whose purported purpose would be to improve manufacturing technologies, including robotics and automation. These activities would total $250 million during fiscal years 1985-1988, and represent an unwarranted role for the Federal government.

I am withholding my approval of H.R. 5479, a bill "to amend section 504 of title 5, United States Code, and section 2412 of title 28, United States Code, with respect to awards of expenses of certain agency and court proceedings, and for other purposes." H.R. 5479 would permanently reauthorize the Act, and make a number of significant changes to the Equal Access to Justice Act. The Act allows the award of attorneys' fees to parties who successfully litigate against the government unless the government demonstrates that its position is substantially justified or that special circumstances exist that make a fee award unjust. Because the Equal Access to Justice Act expired on September 30, 1984, legislation is needed to reauthorize the Act.

I am firmly committed to the policies underlying the Equal Access to Justice Act and will make the permanent and retroactive reauthorization of the Act a high legislative priority of the Administration in the next Congress. Where the Federal government has taken a position in litigation that is not substantially justified, and thereby has caused a small business or individual to incur unnecessary attorneys' fees and legal costs, I believe it proper for the government to reim-