

VETO—S. 2436

MESSAGE

FROM

THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

RETURNING

WITHOUT MY APPROVAL S. 2436, THE PUBLIC BROADCASTING
AMENDMENTS ACT OF 1984, WHICH INCREASES SPENDING ON
PUBLIC BROADCASTING BY A MAGNITUDE WHICH CANNOT
BE JUSTIFIED



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To the Senate of the United States:

Since the adjournment of the Congress has prevented my return of S. 2436 within the meaning of Article I, section 7, clause 2 of the Constitution, my withholding of approval from the bill precludes its becoming a law. Notwithstanding what I believe to be my constitutional power regarding the use of the "pocket veto" during an adjournment of Congress, however, I am sending S. 2436 to the Senate with my objections, consistent with the Court of Appeals decision in *Kennedy v. Sampson*, 511 F.2d 430 (D.C. Cir. 1974).

Public broadcasting constitutes an important national resource and contributes to the diversity of news, information, and entertainment choices available to the American public. Under S. 2436, however, Federal funding for public broadcasting would be increased by too much too fast. The Fiscal Year 1987 authorization of \$238 million for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting represents a 49 percent increase over the already enacted funding level for 1986. Likewise, next year's spending on new public broadcasting facilities grants would be authorized at \$50 million or four times this year's appropriation.

When all of the demands on the Federal budget are taken into account, increases in spending on public broadcasting of the magnitude contemplated by this legislation cannot be justified. They are incompatible with the clear and urgent need to reduce Federal spending. Moreover, this view is clearly shared by a large portion of the House of Representatives as indicated by the 176 votes in favor of the Oxley amendment to reduce the three-year authorizations by 25 percent.

In disapproving this bill, therefore, I urge the Congress to consider a revised bill providing more reasonable and moderate increases for the Board for Public Broadcasting along the lines of the Oxley amendment. I also reiterate my strong opposition to the huge increases for public facilities grants contained in S. 2436 and the unjustified expansion of this program to include repair and replacement of existing equipment.

I must also stress that my firm insistence on scaling this bill back to more fiscally responsible levels in no way jeopardize the continued operations of public broadcasting stations across the Nation. Under the established funding mechanism, ample appropriations have already been enacted into law for all of Fiscal Years 1985 and 1986. Funding for another 25 months is already guaranteed.

Thus, the issue regarding S. 2436 is really one of long-range fiscal prudence. Given the magnitude of the deficit cuts that will be needed in the years ahead, I do not believe we can justify locking-in public broadcasting funding levels for 1987-1989 that are so obviously excessive. To do so would be wholly inconsistent with our pledge to slow the growth of spending and reduce the size of the deficit.

Accordingly, I am disapproving S. 2436.

RONALD REAGAN.

THE WHITE HOUSE, August 29, 1984.