

keep pace with changes in the cost of living.

H.R. 3 provides a 5.4 percent increase in compensation and DIC benefits effective January 1, 1991. Nearly 2.2 million Armed Forces veterans and their dependents will benefit from this increase. In addition, the same increase will be provided for some 275,000 surviving spouses and 38,000 children who receive DIC benefits. These are survivors of some 300,000 veterans who either died in service to our country or as a result of service-connected disabilities. This bipartisan legislation bears witness that Americans now and always will keep faith with those who have given the full measure of devotion in defense of our freedoms.

Now more than ever, Americans are reminded that we owe a special debt to our

veterans who have unselfishly placed their lives on the line and sacrificed so much in service to the Nation. Our existence as a Nation and the freedoms and liberties we enjoy, which are too often taken for granted, depend on the men and women in our Armed Forces. The measure I sign today demonstrates our gratitude and continuing commitment to those who have served our country.

GEORGE BUSH

The White House,
February 6, 1991.

Note: H.R. 3, approved February 6, was assigned Public Law No. 102-3.

Statement on Signing the Agent Orange Act of 1991 February 6, 1991

I am pleased today to sign into law H.R. 556, the "Agent Orange Act of 1991." This legislation relies on science to settle the troubling questions concerning the effect on veterans of exposure to herbicides—such as Agent Orange—used during the Vietnam era.

H.R. 556 will have three primary effects:

- It will codify decisions previously made by my Administration with respect to presumptions of service connection related to the Vietnam experience and herbicide exposure.
- It will establish a new procedure for determining whether particular diseases are related to exposure to Agent Orange. This includes calling upon the National Academy of Sciences to study the scientific evidence concerning the potential health effects of exposure to Agent Orange and other herbicides used in Vietnam.
- It will provide a reasoned and scientific basis for determining whether to proceed with further studies concerning the effects of exposure to herbicides.

The issue of the effects of exposure to Agent Orange is one of deeply held, but

divisive, beliefs. I believe that my Administration has done an exemplary job in carrying out the mandate of Public Law 98-542, the "Veterans' Dioxin and Radiation Exposure Compensation Standards Act." I want to express my particular thanks to the Veterans' Advisory Committee on Environmental Hazards, a Federal advisory committee established by that law. This committee, since its creation in 1985, has done a thoroughly professional job in carrying out its assigned duties.

Nevertheless, I am aware of the concern of some that a nongovernmental review would be of value. Accordingly, I applaud the efforts of the Congress to work toward a thoughtful and meaningful compromise of the Agent Orange issue.

My Administration has stated many times one overriding goal in this area—providing the truth to Vietnam veterans about the effects of exposure to Agent Orange. I believe that this legislation will further that goal, and I am therefore pleased to sign H.R. 556.

GEORGE BUSH

The White House,
February 6, 1991.

*Note: H.R. 556, approved February 6, was
assigned Public Law No. 102-4.*

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Report on Federal Energy Conservation Activities

February 6, 1991

To the Congress of the United States:

I transmit herewith the annual report describing the activities of the Federal Government for fiscal year 1989 required by subtitle H, title V of the Energy Security Act (Public Law 96-264; 42 U.S.C. 8286 *et seq.*). These activities include the development of energy conservation and effi-

ciency standards for new commercial and multi-family high rise buildings and for new residential buildings.

GEORGE BUSH

The White House,
February 6, 1991.

Message to the Congress Transmitting the Annual Report of the Federal Labor Relations Authority

February 6, 1991

To the Congress of the United States:

In accordance with section 701 of the Civil Service Reform Act of 1978 (Public Law 95-454; 5 U.S.C. 7104(e)), I have the pleasure of transmitting to you the Eleventh Annual Report of the Federal Labor Relations Authority for Fiscal Year 1989.

The report includes information on the

cases heard and decisions rendered by the Federal Labor Relations Authority, the General Counsel of the Authority, and the Federal Service Impasses Panel.

GEORGE BUSH

The White House,
February 6, 1991.

Statement on the Death of Danny Thomas

February 6, 1991

The death of Danny Thomas leaves a noticeable void in the world of American humor. We also lose a fine gentleman and humanitarian who will always be known as a man of good will.

Danny Thomas entertained Presidents from Eisenhower to the present. He was a giant of the entertainment business who knew that spark of delight which Americans take in poking fun at themselves. In his situation comedies, either as actor or producer, he reflected the best qualities of

American life. He pioneered the family sitcom in which we could all use the new medium of television to laugh at ourselves and our daily problems. We will be laughing with him for years to come.

In 1962, Danny Thomas founded St. Jude Children's Research Hospital in Memphis, TN. It became more than a leading research center dedicated to finding cures for children's cancer and other diseases, but a symbol of the love that one man had for his