

Oct. 27 / Administration of George Bush, 1992

Note: S. 2044, approved October 26, was assigned Public Law No. 102-524. This statement was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 27.

Statement on Signing Legislation Establishing the Brown v. Board of Education National Historic Site

October 26, 1992

Today I am signing into law S. 2890, a bill to establish the *Brown v. Board of Education* National Historic Site in Topeka, Kansas, redesignate the Fort Jefferson National Monument as the Dry Tortugas National Park, and provide for studies of the New River in West Virginia and Boston Harbor Islands in Massachusetts.

Although I have signed S. 2890, I will withhold my approval of H.R. 5021, the “New River Wild and Scenic Study Act of 1992,” and H.R. 5061, a bill concerning

the “Dry Tortugas National Park,” because S. 2890 contains the identical provisions of both H.R. 5021 and H.R. 5061.

GEORGE BUSH

The White House,
October 26, 1992.

Note: S. 2890, approved October 26, was assigned Public Law No. 102-525. This statement was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 27.

Statement on Signing the President John F. Kennedy Assassination Records Collection Act of 1992

October 26, 1992

Today I am signing into law S. 3006, the “President John F. Kennedy Assassination Records Collection Act of 1992.” This legislation provides for the review and, wherever possible, the release of records about the assassination of President Kennedy that have not yet been made public. I fully support the goals of this legislation.

In the minds of many Americans, questions about President Kennedy’s assassination remain unresolved. Although the Government already has released many thousands of documents, the existence of additional, undisclosed documents has led to speculation that these materials might shed important new light on the assassination. Because of legitimate historical interest in this tragic event, all documents about the assassination should now be disclosed, except where the strongest possible reasons counsel otherwise.

While I am pleased that this legislation avoids the chief constitutional problems

raised by earlier versions of the bill considered by the Congress, it still raises several constitutional questions. First, S. 3006 sets forth the grounds on which the release of documents may be postponed, but this list does not contemplate nondisclosure of executive branch deliberations or law enforcement information of the executive branch (including the entities listed in sections 3(2) (G) through (K)), and it provides only a narrow basis for nondisclosure of national security information. My authority to protect these categories of information comes from the Constitution and cannot be limited by statute. Although only the most extraordinary circumstances would require postponement of the disclosure of documents for reasons other than those recognized in the bill, I cannot abdicate my constitutional responsibility to take such action when necessary. The same applies to the provision purporting to give certain con-

gressional committees “access to any records held or created by the Review Board.” This provision will be interpreted consistently with my authority under the Constitution to protect confidential executive branch materials and to supervise and guide executive branch officials.

Second, S. 3006 requires the Board to report to the President and the Congress. If the bill were interpreted to require simultaneous reports, S. 3006 would intrude upon the President’s authority to supervise subordinate officials in the executive branch. I will construe the provisions to require that the Board report to the President before it reports to the Congress.

Third, the bill purports to set the qualifications for Board members, to require the President to review lists supplied by specified organizations, and to direct the timing of nominations. These provisions conflict with the constitutional division of responsibility between the President and the Congress. The President has the sole power of nomination; the Senate has the sole

power of consent.

I note also that S. 3006 provides that, upon request of the Board, courts may enforce subpoenas that the Attorney General has issued at the Board’s urging. I sign this bill on the understanding that this provision does not encroach upon the Attorney General’s usual, plenary authority to represent the agencies of the United States, including the Board, whenever they appear in court.

S. 3006 will help put to rest the doubts and suspicions about the assassination of President Kennedy. I sign the bill in the hope that it will assist in healing the wounds inflicted on our Nation almost 3 decades ago.

GEORGE BUSH

The White House,
October 26, 1992.

Note: S. 3006, approved October 26, was assigned Public Law No. 102–526. This statement was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 27.

Remarks and a Question-and-Answer Session in Des Moines, Iowa October 27, 1992

The President. Thank you all. Thank you very, very much. Please be seated. Let’s get right about our business. But first, I certainly want to thank our great Governor, Terry Branstad, for being at my side for that warm welcome. And of course, I needn’t tell Iowans how important Chuck Grassley’s reelection is, I’ll tell you. And for Jim Ross Lightfoot and for Jim Leach, two stalwart friends, if we had more like them in the Congress, you wouldn’t hear everybody yelling everywhere I go “Clean House!” We need more like him, so send us more like him, and let’s get this country moving. I’m delighted to see former Governor Ray here, and I also want to thank “Major Dad,” Gerald McRaney, who is—you talk about telling it like it is—he does a great job.

Terry mentioned the ag economy, and I do think that when people get down to the wire in the heartland of America they

ought to look at the record. I am very proud that ethanol is up and that we made a tough call. I took on some of the extremes in the environmental movement. I’ve got a good record on the environment. We took on some of the extremes and said, look, ethanol is a tremendous fuel of the future. Ethanol sales are up. The waiver we gave the other day is appropriate. It is sound conservation, and it is darn good for the American economy, and we’re going to keep on.

Similarly, the use of the export program, the Export Enhancement, the EEP, is important. We extended it to pork, and it was the right thing to do. I think that will help. We will continue to fight for opening up our markets. We’ve got the best producers of agricultural goods in the world. Exports have saved us through tough times, agricultural exports leading the way. And my op-