

Oct. 27 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1995

tell them what we believe in, and it will all work out. We'll make it work out for America.

*Representative Gephardt.* Great.

*Senator Daschle.* Thank you.

*The President.* Thanks.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:23 p.m. from the Oval Office in the White House.

## Statement on Signing the Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 1996

October 27, 1995

I have signed into law H.R. 1976, the "Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 1996."

I urge the Congress to complete action on the remaining regular FY 1996 appropriations bills and to send them to me in acceptable form. Last year, the Congress sent to me—and I signed—all 13 appropriations bills by September 30. Regrettably, this is only the second bill that I have been able to sign for this fiscal year.

This Act provides \$13.4 billion in discretionary budget authority for programs of the Department of Agriculture and the Food and Drug Administration, including the Special Supplemental Feeding Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC); food safety programs; and various programs to protect and support rural communities.

The Act also provides a total of \$41.2 billion for the Food Stamp program, the Child Nutrition program, the Commodity Credit Corporation, and other mandatory programs.

In signing this bill, I have made it possible for USDA to promptly send full-year payments of nearly \$1.8 billion for the Conservation Reserve Program. This program compensates farmers for protecting environmentally sensitive cropland.

I am pleased that H.R. 1976 provides the resources necessary to keep the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children on the Administration's path to full funding. An estimated 7.5 million women and children will be served, 400,000 more than in FY 1995. This program provides important nutrition benefits and health-related services.

I am also pleased that the Congress continued funding at my requested level for the Child Nutrition program and other important nutrition programs for needy Americans, including the

Commodity Supplemental Food Program, Soup Kitchens, and the Nutrition Program for the Elderly.

Funds included in the bill for the Agricultural Conservation Program will provide Federal cost-share financing to farmers for needed soil and water conservation practices and structures, including water quality improvements.

The bill also includes funds I requested for farm operating and farm ownership loans, which help new farmers get started in agriculture, as well as those farmers who do not qualify for private-sector financing.

In addition, H.R. 1976 omits many of the troublesome provisions contained in earlier versions of the bill that would have compromised the ability of Federal nutrition programs to assist low-income Americans. However, I am concerned about the provisions to reduce food stamp spending in an appropriations bill. This action may lead to proposals for additional food stamp cuts in the reconciliation process. This program, which assists almost 27 million low-income children, elderly, and working family members, continues to be the cornerstone of the Federal nutrition safety net.

The Act permits full funding for the Export Enhancement Program, as I requested. This program assists exports of American agricultural products, which reached an all-time high in FY 1995 of \$53 billion—a trend we would like to continue.

While funding provided by H.R. 1976 is an improvement over funding levels in earlier versions of the bill, I am still disappointed by its reductions from my request for rural development. By contrast the Act includes \$58 million in unrequested funds for earmarked university research facilities. I believe rural Americans would have been better served had these funds instead been channeled into rural development

programs. Doing so could have, for example, helped 7,000 rural families realize the American dream of owning their own home through USDA's single-family loan program.

Section 726 raises constitutional concerns and I have therefore asked the Department of Justice to advise me as to the validity and enforceability of that section.

Despite these concerns the overall bill is acceptable because of the very positive provisions I have already mentioned and because of the

benefits its programs provide to farm families and rural communities.

Again, I urge the Congress to meet its responsibilities by sending me the remaining regular FY 1996 appropriations bills in acceptable form.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,  
October 27, 1995.

NOTE: H.R. 1976, approved October 27, was assigned Public Law No. 104-37.

## The President's Radio Address *October 28, 1995*

Good morning. I want to talk to you today about what's at stake for the American people in the great budget debate now taking place in Washington. But first, I've got some good news to report.

Our country is on the move. Our economy is the strongest in the world, and it's growing. Yesterday, the official report on the economy for the last 3 months showed continued strong economic growth with very low inflation. And this week we also learned that we've cut the budget deficit nearly in half since I became President. It has dropped for 3 years in a row for the first time since President Truman was in office. The American people should be proud of their accomplishment.

Now it's time to finish the job and balance the budget, so that we don't pass a mountain of debt on to our children and we free up more funds to be invested in our economy. But we need to do it in a way that reflects our core values: opportunity for all Americans to make the most of their own lives; responsibility—we all must do our part, no more something for nothing; and third, recognizing our community, our common obligations to preserve and strengthen our families, to do our duty to our parents, to fulfill our obligation to give our children the best future possible with good schools and good health care and safe streets and a clean environment; and finally, a determination to keep our Nation the strongest in the world.

I have proposed a balanced budget that secures Medicare into the future, that increases

our investment in education and technology, that protects the environment, that keeps our country the strongest in the world. Because working people do deserve a tax break, it includes a tax cut targeted at education and childrearing. My balanced budget reflects our national values.

It's also in our national interest. We now have 3 years of evidence that our economic strategy works. Reduce the deficit, sell more American products around the world, invest in education and technology—it gives you more jobs, more new businesses, more homeowners, a stronger future for all Americans. But this week the Republican Congress voted to enact an extreme budget that violates our values and I believe is bad for our long-term interest.

All Americans believe in honoring our parents and keeping our pledge that they'll live out their last years in dignity. But the Republican budget cuts \$450 billion out of the health care system, doubles premiums for senior citizens. And the House budget actually repeals the rule called spousal impoverishment. What this means is they would let a State say to an elderly couple that if the husband or the wife has to go into a nursing home, the other has to sell the house, the car, and clean out the bank account before there can be any help from the Government. They say, "We'll then help you, and how you get along afterward is your own problem."

The Republicans say they support Medicare. They say they just want to reform it. But just this week we learned that the Senate majority leader is bragging that he opposed Medicare