

Oct. 30 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1998

Commercialization and the Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Technology. These programs address two important components of our overall competitiveness strategy: our wise use of commercial space capabilities, consistent with public safety and national security requirements, and enhancement of technological opportunities for the States.

This Act furthers my Administration's commitment to ensure that technology remains the engine of economic growth. We have more work

to do. My Administration will work with the 106th Congress on legislation to reauthorize the Commerce Department's Technology Administration and other NIST programs.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
October 30, 1998.

NOTE: H.R. 1274, approved October 30, was assigned Public Law No. 105-309.

Statement on Signing Wildlife and Wetlands Legislation

October 30, 1998

Today I am signing into law H.R. 2807, an omnibus measure that includes many provisions I supported to enhance fish and wildlife protection.

The Act reauthorizes the Rhinoceros and Tiger Conservation Act through FY 2002 and prohibits the sale, importation, and exportation of products labeled or advertised as derived from rhinoceroses or tigers. This will substantially eliminate the demand for products made from these endangered species. The Act also reauthorizes, through FY 2003, the North American Wetlands Conservation Act and the Partnerships for Wildlife Act, two of the most popular, cost-effective, and productive environmental conservation programs.

I note that section 304 of the Act amends the criteria for appointing individuals to the North American Wetlands Conservation Council. Specifically, this provision purportedly designates an officeholder of a named private organization as a Council member. This raises two issues. First, the Council is involved in the implementation of Federal wetlands conservation programs and, therefore, its members are considered offi-

cers of the United States. Pursuant to the Appointments Clause of the Constitution, the Congress may not appoint Federal officers. Consequently, I will instruct the Secretary of the Interior merely to consider the designated individual along with other appropriate candidates for appointment to the Council.

Second, if the Secretary ultimately selects the individual designated by the Act, that individual will be subject to executive branch standards of conduct and criminal conflict-of-interest statutes. The individual's ability to act fully as a Council member therefore may be somewhat curtailed by his or her affiliation with a private organization.

On balance, the Act provides a considerable benefit to the conservation of fish and wildlife, and I am pleased to sign it into law.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
October 30, 1998.

NOTE: H.R. 2807, approved October 30, was assigned Public Law No. 105-312.

Statement on Signing the Identity Theft and Assumption Deterrence Act of 1998

October 30, 1998

Today I signed into law H.R. 4151, the "Identity Theft and Assumption Deterrence Act of

1998." This legislation will make identity theft a Federal crime, with penalties generally of up