

America's determination to pursue justice for Holocaust victims and their families.

The United States has led the renewed struggle for justice and compensation on behalf of the victims of the Holocaust. One year ago, delegations from 44 countries and 13 nongovernmental organizations met at the Washington Conference on Holocaust-Era Assets convened by the Department of State and the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum. During the Washington Conference, I announced the public and governmental members of the Presidential Advisory Commission, which was created to investigate and advise on the fate of Holocaust victims' assets that came into the possession or control of the United States Government.

Since then, the Presidential Advisory Commission has been hard at work and estimates that it will have to examine more than 45 million pages of documents. To our Nation's credit, the amount of information to be reviewed increases every week as remaining Nazi-era documents are declassified. The U.S. Holocaust Assets

Commission Extension Act of 1999 provides the Presidential Advisory Commission with additional time and authorizes additional resources needed to complete the review of the historical record of American activity during one of the darkest periods of this century.

The Commission's research demonstrates irrefutably that we in the United States are willing to hold ourselves to the same high standard of truth about Holocaust assets to which we have held other nations. The extension of the Presidential Advisory Commission sends a strong message, both at home and abroad, that we are committed to examining difficult aspects of our history and determining how to build a better world for our children in the next millennium.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
December 9, 1999.

NOTE: H.R. 2401, approved December 9, was assigned Public Law No. 106-155.

Statement on Signing the John H. Chafee Coastal Barrier Resources System Act

December 9, 1999

I am pleased to sign into law S. 1866, the "John H. Chafee Coastal Barrier Resources System Act." Renaming the Coastal Barrier Resources System in Senator Chafee's honor is an appropriate tribute to a man who worked so hard—and so successfully—to find common ground in the struggle to protect and preserve the environment for future generations.

Senator Chafee authored the Coastal Barrier Resources Act, a law which protects pristine and fragile coastal barriers from development by restricting Federal expenditures that would otherwise encourage such development. This Act has successfully minimized the loss of human life by discouraging development in high-risk areas. It also has reduced the wasteful expenditures of Federal resources and protected the natural resources associated with coastal barriers. Today, approximately 3 million acres of fragile coastal barrier lands are part of the Coastal Barrier Resources System created by the Act.

Senator Chafee's legacy of achievements in environmental protection is extraordinary and far ranging. He worked tirelessly to ensure the protection of our land, air, and water and he took special pride in the success of the Coastal Barrier Resources Act. For this reason, it is especially fitting that we honor Senator Chafee by renaming the Coastal Barrier Resources System as the John H. Chafee Coastal Barrier Resources System.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,

December 9, 1999.

NOTE: H.R. 1866, approved December 9, was assigned Public Law No. 106-167.