

for international peacekeeping, peace-enforcement, or humanitarian assistance operations might require action of a kind covered by section 8066 sooner than 15 days after notification, the executive branch shall construe section 8066 in a manner consistent with my constitutional duty as Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces.

A proviso in the Act's appropriation for "Operation and Maintenance, Defense-Wide" prohibits implementation of, and purports to prohibit planning for, consolidation of certain offices within the Department of Defense. Similarly, section 8121 of the Act purports to specify the content of future Department of Defense budgetary and programming plans. The executive branch shall construe these provisions relating to planning in a manner consistent with the President's constitutional authority to require the opinions of the heads of departments and to recommend for congressional consideration such measures as the President shall judge necessary and expedient.

Section 8094 of the Act provides that, in implementing a health care interagency partnership under that section, Native Hawaiians shall have the status of Native Americans who are eligible for the

healthcare services provided by the Indian Health Service. The executive branch shall implement section 8094 in a manner consistent with the requirement to afford equal protection of the laws under the Due Process Clause of the Fifth Amendment to the Constitution.

Section 8116 of the Act makes certain appropriated funds available for transportation, food, lodging, supplies, fees, and training materials for members of the Armed Forces and their immediate family members while participating in chaplain-led programs, such as retreats and conferences, that assist them in building and maintaining a strong family structure. In implementing this provision, the executive branch shall accord the fullest respect to the fundamental constitutional right of free exercise of religion, subject to the constitutional limitation on establishment of religion and any other applicable law.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,  
October 23, 2002.

NOTE: H.R. 5010, approved October 23, was assigned Public Law No. 107-248.

## **Statement on Signing the Military Construction Appropriation Act, 2003** *October 23, 2002*

Today I have signed into law H.R. 5011, the "Military Construction Appropriations Act, 2003," which provides \$10.5 billion for Department of Defense military construction and family housing programs. The Act ensures the Nation's military construction priorities are met and provides the resources and infrastructure for our fighting forces at home and abroad. My Administration is committed to improving military housing and the quality of life of our uniformed defenders and their families, and this bill clearly reflects that commitment.

Sections 107, 110, and 113 of the Act provide for notice to the Congress of relocation of activities between military installations, initiation of a new installation abroad, or U.S. military exercises involving \$100,000 in construction costs. The U.S. Supreme Court has stated that the President's authority to classify and control access to information bearing on national security flows from the Constitution and does

not depend upon a legislative grant of authority. Although the notice can be provided in most situations as a matter of comity, situations may arise, especially in wartime, in which the President must act promptly under his constitutional grants of executive power and authority as Commander in Chief while protecting sensitive national security information. The executive branch shall construe these sections in a manner consistent with the President's constitutional authority.

Section 119 provides for the Secretary of Defense to submit a report to the Congress with details of proposed actions to encourage certain cooperating nations to assume a greater share of the common defense burden. The executive branch shall

construe this provision in a manner consistent with the President's constitutional authority to withhold information, the disclosure of which could impair foreign relations, the national security, the deliberative processes of the Executive, or the performance of the Executive's constitutional duties. The Secretary of Defense will, of course, continue as a matter of comity to keep the Congress appropriately informed of the matters addressed by section 119.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,  
October 23, 2002.

NOTE: H.R. 5011, approved October 23, was assigned Public Law No. 107-249.

## Remarks on Children's Online Safety *October 23, 2002*

Thank you all for coming. Welcome to the White House. And thanks for the work that most of you do on behalf of protecting this country's children. Because children are so vulnerable, they need the constant protection of adults. And because children are so vulnerable, they're often the targets of cruel and ruthless criminals.

I am deeply saddened by the recent tragedy that we've seen here in Washington. There is a ruthless person on the loose. I've ordered the full resources of the Federal Government to help local law enforcement officials in their efforts to capture this person. Laura and I join our fellow Americans in prayer as we pray for the families and friends who have lost loved ones, as we pray for the safety of our fellow citizens, as we pray for the quick end to this period of violence and fear.

Protecting children from sexual exploitation is also a priority. It needs to be a priority and is a priority of this country. Earlier this month, I convened the first

ever White House Conference on Missing, Exploited, and Runaway Children, and those efforts continue today.

I've just met with law enforcement representatives from the Federal, State, and local level from several States who spend their time tracking down and prosecuting online predators. These officials are impressive people. They're the best of America. They're doing difficult and disturbing and essential work. And I thank them for coming here today.

Our Nation has made this commitment: Anyone who targets a child for harm will be a primary target of law enforcement. That's our commitment. Anyone who takes the life or innocence of a child will be punished to the full extent of the law.

Today I want to discuss with you several aggressive steps we are taking to protect our children from exploitation and from danger on the Internet.

I appreciate so very much Robert Mueller, the Director of the FBI, is here