

dollar's value ought to be set by the market and by the conditions inherent in our respective economies. And our economy is very strong and is getting stronger. But the policy, the stated policy—and not only the stated policy but the strong belief of this administration is that we have a strong dollar.

Well, listen, thank you all. Alphonso, congratulations.

Deputy Secretary Jackson. Thank you, Mr. President.

The President. I appreciate you coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:40 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to former Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen) of the Palestinian Authority; and James A. Baker III, the President's personal envoy on the issue of Iraqi debt.

Statement on Signing the Syria Accountability and Lebanese Sovereignty Restoration Act of 2003

December 12, 2003

Today, I have signed into law H.R. 1828, the "Syria Accountability and Lebanese Sovereignty Restoration Act of 2003." The Act is intended to strengthen the ability of the United States to conduct an effective foreign policy.

Section 5 of the Act purports to impose upon the President requirements to take certain actions against Syria unless the President either determines and certifies to the Congress that the Government of Syria has taken specific actions, or determines that it is in the national security interest of the United States to waive such requirements and reports the reasons for that determination to the Congress. A law cannot burden or infringe the President's exercise of a core constitutional power by attaching conditions precedent to the use of that power. The executive branch shall construe and implement section 5 in a manner consistent with the President's constitutional authority to conduct the Nation's foreign affairs and as Commander in Chief, in particular with respect to the conduct of foreign diplomats in the United States, the conduct of United States diplomats abroad, and the exportation of items and provision of services necessary to the performance

of official functions by United States Government personnel abroad.

Section 6 of the Act requires an officer in the executive branch to furnish information to the Congress on various subjects involving Syria and terrorism. The executive branch shall construe section 6 in a manner consistent with the President's constitutional authority to withhold information the disclosure of which could impair foreign relations, national security, the deliberative processes of the Executive, or the performance of the Executive's constitutional duties.

My approval of the Act does not constitute my adoption of the various statements of policy in the Act as U.S. foreign policy. Given the Constitution's commitment to the Presidency of the authority to conduct the Nation's foreign affairs, the executive branch shall construe such policy statements as advisory, giving them the due weight that comity between the legislative and executive branches should require, to the extent consistent with U.S. foreign policy.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
December 12, 2003.

NOTE: H.R. 1828, approved December 12, was assigned Public Law No. 108–175.

Statement on Signing the Vision 100—Century of Aviation Reauthorization Act

December 12, 2003

Today, I have signed into law H.R. 2115, the “Vision 100—Century of Aviation Reauthorization Act.” The Act is designed to strengthen America’s aviation sector, provide needed authority to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), and enhance the safety of the traveling public.

Subtitle A of title II of the Act amends section 106 of title 49 of the United States Code to abolish the Air Traffic Services Subcommittee of the Federal Aviation Management Advisory Council and creates, separate from the Council, an Air Traffic Services Committee (ATSC). Section 106 as amended vests in the ATSC substantial governmental authority, including the power to approve the FAA’s strategic plan for the air traffic control system, certain large procurements, appointment and pay of the FAA Chief Operating Officer, FAA major reorganizations, and the FAA cost accounting and financial management structure. Under section 106(p)(6)(C), as amended, the members of the abolished Air Traffic Services Subcommittee of the Council automatically become the members of the ATSC, but only to “serve in an advisory capacity,” with the ATSC beginning to exercise non-advisory authority when the ATSC members have been appointed by the President by and with the advice and consent of the Senate. Accordingly, in light of section 106(p)(6)(C), the executive branch shall construe the provisions of section 106(p) and 106(r) that refer to approval or other non-advisory functions of the ATSC to require, from the date of enactment of the Act through the date on which the last Senate-confirmed Presi-

dential appointment is made to the ATSC, only notice to the ATSC and an opportunity for the ATSC to express its views.

Section 106(p)(7)(B)(iii) of title 49, as enacted by section 202 of the bill, purports to limit the qualifications of the pool of persons from whom the President may select ATSC members in a manner that rules out a large portion of those persons best qualified by experience and knowledge to fill the office. Congressional participation in such appointments is limited by the Appointments Clause of the Constitution to the Senate’s provision of advice and consent with respect to Presidential nominees. The executive branch shall construe the provisions concerning qualifications in section 106(p)(7)(B)(iii) as advisory, as is consistent with the Appointments Clause.

Section 47171 of title 49, as enacted by section 304(a) of the Act, purports to mandate the process for cooperation among agencies in the executive branch in conducting environmental reviews for certain airport projects. In particular, section 47171(i) purports to require one part of the executive branch to report to committees of Congress when a second part of the executive branch has not met the first part’s deadlines for action on certain environmental reviews, and then requires the second part to explain to the committees why it did not meet the deadline and what actions it intends to take to complete the relevant matter. The executive branch shall implement section 47171 in a manner and to the extent consistent with the President’s constitutional authority to supervise the unitary executive branch.