

world's interest that Croatia join NATO as well as the European Union. And to that end, when I go to Riga, I will make the case that Croatia should be admitted. It seems like a reasonable date would be 2008.

We talked about bilateral relations. We talked about investments, investment opportunities in Croatia. We talked about the need to enhance trade and commerce. The Prime Minister has invited me to come. I've heard unbelievably great things about your country, Mr. Prime Minister. I hear it's one of the most beautiful places on the face of the Earth. I'd love to come sometime. I've got to clear it first with my wife. *[Laughter]*

But nevertheless, all in all, it's been a very good meeting. And I welcome you here, and thank you for coming.

Prime Minister Sanader. Thank you, Mr. President. I've been touched by the warmth of this reception during this visit and of the interest and understanding you have shown in Croatia and the challenges facing Europe today.

About the only question we disagreed was whether Croatia or the United States had the most beautiful coastline.

President Bush. That's right. *[Laughter]*

Prime Minister Sanader. I will let you and Mrs. Bush judge for yourselves when you visit Croatia, where you certainly will be most welcome, Mr. President.

The President and I, we discussed a range of issues of bilateral concerns, especially of the preparations of my country to join EU and NATO. And I expressed my gratitude to the President for his constant support for Croatia on its way.

I also—we discussed a range of issues of—regarding our region of southeastern Europe: final status of Kosovo; Georgia; Ukraine; Moldova. We are very active. Croatia is not forgetting that we are in the region where we still need a strong U.S. and European cooperation. We believe strongly in transatlantic partnership. There is no alternative to this. I think that President Bush and the United States of America, along with the EU, have still to be very, very closely cooperating in a couple of issues in Europe.

So thank you very much, Mr. President, for warm reception and very fruitful discussion.

President Bush. Thank you, sir. I appreciate it. Good job. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:16 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House.

Statement on Signing the Northern California Coastal Wild Heritage Wilderness Act

October 17, 2006

Today, I have signed into law H.R. 233, the "Northern California Coastal Wild Heritage Wilderness Act." The Act strengthens protection of certain lands in California.

Section 4(i)(2) of the Act purports to give binding legal effect to guidelines in an appendix to a report issued by a congressional committee, which was not incorporated into the Act and for which presentment was not made. Consistent with the bicameral ap-

proval and presentment requirements of the Constitution for the making of a law, the executive branch shall, in carrying out the Act, take appropriate account of the guidelines as a matter of comity between the executive and legislative branches.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
October 17, 2006.

NOTE: H.R. 233, approved October 17, was assigned Public Law No. 109–362.

Statement on Signing the John Warner National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2007

October 17, 2006

Today, I have signed into law H.R. 5122, the “John Warner National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2007” (the “Act”). The Act authorizes funding for the defense of the United States and its interests abroad, for military construction, for national security-related energy programs, and for maritime security-related transportation programs.

Several provisions of the Act call for executive branch officials to submit to the Congress recommendations for legislation, or purport to regulate the manner in which the President formulates recommendations to the Congress for legislation. These provisions include sections 516(h), 575(g), 603(b), 705(d), 719(b), 721(e), 741(e), 813, 1008, 1016(d), 1035(b)(3), 1047(b), and 1102 of the Act, section 118(b)(4) of title 10, United States Code, as amended by section 1031 of the Act, section 2773b of title 10 as amended by section 1053 of the Act, and section 403 of the Ronald W. Reagan National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2005 (Public Law 108–375) as amended by section 403 of the Act. The executive branch shall construe these provisions in a manner consistent with the President’s constitutional authority to supervise the unitary executive branch and to recommend for the consideration of the Congress such measures as the President deems necessary and expedient.

The executive branch shall construe sections 914 and 1512 of the Act, which purport to make consultation with specified Members of Congress a precondition to the execution of the law, as calling for but not mandating such consultation, as is con-

sistent with the Constitution’s provisions concerning the separate powers of the Congress to legislate and the President to execute the laws.

A number of provisions in the Act call for the executive branch to furnish information to the Congress or other entities on various subjects. These provisions include sections 219, 313, 360, 1211, 1212, 1213, 1227, 1402, and 3116 of the Act, section 427 of title 10, United States Code, as amended by section 932 of the Act, and section 1093 of the Ronald W. Reagan National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2005 (Public Law 108–375) as amended by section 1061 of the Act. The executive branch shall construe such provisions 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 executive branch shall construe as advisory section 1011(b)(2) of the Act, which purports to prohibit the Secretary of the Navy from retiring a specified warship from operational status unless, among other things, a treaty organization established by the U.S. and foreign nations gives formal notice that it does not desire to maintain and operate that warship. If construed as mandatory rather than advisory, the provision would impermissibly interfere with the President’s constitutional authority to conduct the Nation’s foreign affairs and as Commander in Chief.