

Listen, thank you all for your time. I appreciate it.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 10:33 a.m. in the James S. Brady Press Briefing Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Secretary of Transportation Mary E. Peters; Gen. David H. Petraeus, USA, commanding general,

Multi-National Force—Iraq; U.S. Ambassador to Iraq Ryan C. Crocker; Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki of Iraq; President Mahmud Ahmadi-nejad of Iran; and I. Lewis “Scooter” Libby, former Chief of Staff to the Vice President. He also referred to H.R. 2272, the America COMPETES Act. A reporter referred to Republican Presidential candidate Willard M. “Mitt” Romney.

## Statement on Signing the America COMPETES Act August 9, 2007

Today I signed into law H.R. 2272, the “America Creating Opportunities to Meaningfully Promote Excellence in Technology, Education, and Science Act.” This legislation shares many of the goals of my American Competitiveness Initiative (ACI). ACI is one of my most important domestic priorities because it provides a comprehensive strategy to help keep America the most innovative nation in the world by strengthening our scientific education and research, improving our technological enterprise, and providing 21st-century job training.

Since I announced ACI in January 2006, Congress has risen to the competitiveness challenge in a bipartisan way. House and Senate appropriators started the funding for ACI basic research programs in fiscal year 2007, and so far in this year's appropriations process, they are fully funding my fiscal year 2008 budget request for the National Science Foundation, the Office of Science in the Department of Energy, and the National Institute of Standards and Technology at the Department of Commerce.

This bipartisan spirit of cooperation continues with the legislation I signed. This legislation supports our efforts to double funding for basic research in the physical sciences. And the bill authorizes most of the education programs I called for in ACI, including the Math Now proposal that im-

proves instruction in mathematics and the Advanced Placement program that increases the number of teachers and students participating in AP and International Baccalaureate classes.

I am, however, disappointed that Congress failed to authorize my Adjunct Teacher Corps program to encourage math and science professionals to teach in our schools. I am also disappointed that the legislation includes excessive authorizations and expansion of Government. In total, the bill creates over 30 new programs that are mostly duplicative or counterproductive—including a new Department of Energy agency to fund late-stage technology development more appropriately left to the private sector—and also provides excessive authorizations for existing programs. These new programs, additional requirements and reports, and excessive authorizations will divert resources and focus from priority activities aimed at strengthening the basic research that has given our Nation such a competitive advantage in the world economy. Accordingly, I will request funding in my 2009 budget for those authorizations that support the focused priorities of the ACI, but will not propose excessive or duplicative funding based on authorizations in this bill.

While this legislation includes many unnecessary and misguided programs, in many

important ways it heeds my call to action of nearly 2 years ago to take steps to ensure the ongoing competitiveness of our Nation. Congress, however, still has more work to do to improve our Nation's competitiveness. In addition to giving priority to full ACI funding in this year's appropriations bills, I call on Congress to complete work on the remaining components of ACI, including modernizing and making permanent the research and development tax credit, authorizing the Adjunct Teacher Corps program, and increasing our ability to attract and retain the best and brightest high-skilled workers from around the world.

I thank members of both parties in Congress who worked on this legislation, and I appreciate the willingness of members to remove or otherwise address several of the administration's serious concerns associated with this legislation. I will continue to work with the Congress to ensure that we keep America competitive through appropriate and strong support for science and technology.

NOTE: H.R. 2272, approved August 9, was assigned Public Law No. 110-69.

## Memorandum on Reimbursement for Former President Gerald R. Ford Funeral Expenses

August 9, 2007

*Memorandum for the Director of the Office of Management and Budget*

*Subject:* Reimbursement for Former President Gerald R. Ford Funeral Expenses

Pursuant to the authority vested in me as the President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States including Public Law 110-5, the Revised Continuing Appropriations Resolution, 2007, I hereby authorize the expenditure from the appropriation, "Unanticipated Needs:"

To	Amount
Gerald R. Ford Foundation,	\$230,600.08
Executive Office of the President	
White House Office account,	\$24,808.00

To defray expenses incurred as a result of the funeral services for former President Gerald R. Ford.

I hereby determine that this expenditure is necessary to meet unanticipated needs in furtherance of the national interest.

GEORGE W. BUSH

## Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting the District of Columbia's Fiscal Year 2008 Budget Request

August 9, 2007

*Dear Madam Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)*

Pursuant to my constitutional authority and as contemplated by section 446 of The District of Columbia Self-Governmental Reorganization Act as amended in 1989,

I am transmitting the District of Columbia's 2008 Budget Request Act. This transmittal does not represent an endorsement of the contents of the D.C. government's requests.

The proposed 2008 Budget Request Act reflects the major programmatic objectives