

more than \$10 billion. These projects are not funded through a merit-based process and provide a vehicle for wasteful Government spending.

There is still more to be done to rein in Government spending. In February I will submit my budget proposal for fiscal year 2009, which will once again restrain spending, keep taxes low, and continue us on a path towards a balanced budget. I look forward to working with the Congress in the coming year to ensure taxpayer dollars are spent wisely.

Finally, this legislation contains certain provisions similar to those found in prior appropriations bills passed by the Congress that might be construed to be inconsistent with my Constitutional responsibilities. To avoid such potential infirmities, the executive branch will interpret and construe such provisions in the same manner as I have previously stated in regard to similar provisions.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,  
December 26, 2007.

## Remarks on the Death of Former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto of Pakistan in Crawford, Texas *December 27, 2007*

Laura and I extend our deepest condolences to the family of Benazir Bhutto, to her friends, and to her supporters. We send our condolences to the families of the others who were killed in today's violence. And we send our condolences to all the people of Pakistan on this tragic occasion.

The United States strongly condemns this cowardly act by murderous extremists who are trying to undermine Pakistan's democracy. Those who committed this crime must be brought to justice. Mrs. Bhutto served her nation twice as Prime Minister,

and she knew that her return to Pakistan earlier this year put her life at risk. Yet she refused to allow assassins to dictate the course of her country.

We stand with the people of Pakistan in their struggle against the forces of terror and extremism. We urge them to honor Benazir Bhutto's memory by continuing with the democratic process for which she so bravely gave her life.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:55 a.m. at the Bush Ranch.

## Memorandum to the House of Representatives Returning Without Approval the "National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008" *December 28, 2007*

I am withholding my approval of H.R. 1585, the "National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008," because it would imperil billions of dollars of Iraqi assets at a crucial juncture in that nation's reconstruction efforts and because it would un-

dermine the foreign policy and commercial interests of the United States.

The economic security and successful reconstruction of Iraq have been top priorities of the United States. Section 1083 of H.R. 1585 threatens those key objectives.