

Week Ending Friday, February 2, 1996

Statement on Signing the Ninth Continuing Resolution

January 26, 1996

Today I have signed H.R. 2880, the ninth continuing resolution for fiscal year 1996 that I have signed into law.

This bill ensures that the normal operations of Government continue for departments and agencies for which no full-year appropriations bill has been enacted. It provides funds for certain Federal activities through March 15, and other activities through September 30, 1996.

Specifically, H.R. 2880 provides funds, through March 15, for activities that are normally funded in the Commerce, Justice, State, and Related Agencies bill; the Department of the Interior and Related Agencies bill; the Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education bill; and the Department of Veterans Affairs and Housing and Urban Development, and Independent Agencies bill. It also provides full-year funding (i.e., through September 30) for programs in the Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs bill, ensuring adequate funds to implement an effective foreign policy that protects vital U.S. economic and strategic interests abroad.

I am pleased that the Congress avoided another partial government shutdown, and I appreciate its bipartisan approach toward this bill. Nevertheless, I regret that the Congress has not sent me acceptable 1996 appropriations bills for agencies that received funding only through March 15. Governing by continuing resolution is not the appropriate way for the Congress to perform its work. Once again, I urge the Congress to work with me so that we can reach agreement on the remaining fiscal year 1996 appropriations bills.

I also urge the Congress to send me a straightforward, full-year extension of the debt limit. If the Congress does not raise the debt limit, we would not be able to meet

all of our financial obligations on February 29 or March 1, and would risk not being able to make timely payment of \$30 billion of Social Security benefits and other obligations. A default could raise interest rates and impose serious, long-term harm on the economy. The Congress must act without delay.

Finally, I urge congressional leaders to return to our negotiations to seek an agreement on a balanced budget. We should not give up on that goal.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
January 26, 1996.

NOTE: H.R. 2880, approved January 26, was assigned Public Law No. 104-99. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Statement on Senate Ratification of the START II Nuclear Arms Reduction Treaty With Russia

January 26, 1996

Today, Senate Democrats and Republicans, working together, have increased the security of the American people by ratifying the START II nuclear arms reduction treaty with Russia. I applaud this historic step. As I stated in my State of the Union Address this week, it will make every American, every Russian, and people all over the world more secure.

START II requires dramatic cuts in the nuclear arsenals of our two countries. Together with the START I treaty, which we put into force in December 1994, it will eliminate submarine, bomber, and land-based missile launchers that carried more than 14,000 warheads—two-thirds of the nuclear arsenal the United States and the former Soviet Union maintained at the height of the cold war. START II will also eliminate the most destabilizing type of nu-