

Morris K. Udall. H.R. 2264, approved November 13, was assigned Public Law No. 105–78.

**Statement on Signing the
Departments of Labor, Health and
Human Services, and Education, and
Related Agencies Appropriations
Act, 1998**

November 13, 1997

Today I have signed into law H.R. 2264, the “Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 1998.”

This Act provides over \$80 billion in discretionary budget authority to fund important education, training, and health programs. I am pleased that H.R. 2264 funds a number of my highest domestic priorities at or above my request.

The Act provides \$29.6 billion for the Department of Education, which will allow us to prepare tomorrow’s leaders for the challenges of the future. I am very pleased to see such strong support for Education programs by the Congress, support I hope will only grow stronger in the coming years. First, I am pleased that the Congress has voted to fund the development of voluntary national tests linked to high academic standards in reading and math. I am also very pleased that the Act increases the maximum Pell grant award to my request of \$3,000. This increase, in conjunction with a \$1.4 billion increase in funding, will ease the burden of increasing college costs for low- and middle-income families. Finally, I am very pleased that the Act nearly doubles the Federal investment in educational technology and funds 500 new Charter Schools. I am concerned, however, about the inadequate funding provided for my America Reads Challenge literacy initiative in FY 1998. I am committed to working with the Congress to enact authorizing legislation for a child literacy initiative that will use the \$210 million contingently provided in the bill for FY 1999.

The Act provides \$33.8 billion for the Department of Health and Human Services, providing large increases to a variety of important public health programs. Funding for biomedical research through the National In-

stitutes of Health is increased dramatically. Support for AIDS programs, including programs to assist in the acquisition and provision of break-through AIDS treatments, is stronger than ever. Funding provided in the Act for Head Start moves us closer to achieving my goal of placing 1,000,000 children in Head Start by the year 2002. Head Start provides early childhood development and other social services to children, and this funding level will allow the program to add at least 36,000 new slots.

The Department of Labor receives \$10.7 billion for FY 1998. This will provide strong support for important programs such as assistance to dislocated workers, Summer Jobs, and Job Corps. My Administration will work with the Congress to ensure enactment of training reform legislation by July 1, 1998, to use the \$250 million provided as an advance appropriation in FY 1999 for targeted projects to improve employment among out-of-school youth in high poverty areas. The Act also funds critical worker protection programs, championing the rights of the men and women who keep America working.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
November 13, 1997.

NOTE: H.R. 2264, approved November 13, was assigned Public Law No. 105–78.

**Statement on Congressional Action
on the “Adoption and Safe Families
Act of 1997”**

November 13, 1997

I am pleased that the Senate and the House of Representatives have passed historic, bipartisan legislation to promote adoption and improve our Nation’s child welfare system, giving our Nation’s most vulnerable children what every child deserves—a safe and permanent home. I very much look forward to signing the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997 into law.

This legislation makes clear that children’s health and safety are the paramount concerns of the public child welfare system. I am particularly pleased that the bill incorporates my administration’s recommendations to provide

states with financial incentives to increase the number of children who are adopted and to make other changes in Federal law that will make adoption easier and move children more rapidly out of foster care and into permanent homes. The legislation also strengthens support to States for services that help families stay together when that is possible and promote adoption when it is not. Most important, this legislation will help us meet the goal of doubling, by the year 2002, the number of children who are adopted or permanently placed each year.

I want to thank the many Members of the Senate and the House of Representatives who worked so hard on this bipartisan achievement, but I particularly want to thank the Congressional leadership and the sponsors of this legislation, Senators Chafee and Rockefeller and Representatives Camp and Kennelly, for their commitment. And I would like to add a special work of thanks to the First Lady for her tenacity and dedication to this important issue.

I can think of no better way to celebrate National Adoption Month than to sign this legislation into law.

Message to the House of Representatives Returning Without Approval Legislation To Override of a Line Item Veto

November 13, 1997

To the House of Representatives:

I am returning herewith without my approval H.R. 2631, "An Act disapproving the cancellations transmitted by the President on October 6, 1997, regarding Public Law 105-45."

Under the authority of the Line Item Veto Act, on October 6, 1997, I canceled 38 military construction projects to save the taxpayers \$287 million. The bill would restore all of the 38 projects.

The projects in this bill would not substantially improve the quality of life of military service members and their families, and most of them would not likely use funds for construction in FY 1998. While the bill does restore funding for projects that were canceled based on outdated information provided by

the Department of Defense, I do not endorse restoration of all 38 projects.

The Administration remains committed to working with the Congress to restore funding for those projects that were canceled as a result of data provided by the Department of Defense that was out of date.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
November 13, 1997.

NOTE: The President's remarks on signing the statement and message to the Congress on line item vetoes of the Military Construction Appropriations Act, 1998, dated October 6, were published in the Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents, Volume 33, Number 41, pp. 1501-1503.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting the Report on the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization

November 13, 1997

Dear Mr. Chairman: (Dear Mr. Ranking Member:)

I transmit herewith the 6-month report required under the heading "International Organizations and Programs" in title IV of the Foreign Operations Appropriations Act, 1996 (Public Law 104-107), relating to the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO).

Sincerely,

William J. Clinton

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Ted Stevens, chairman, and Robert C. Byrd, ranking member, Senate Committee on Appropriations; and Robert L. Livingston, chairman, and David R. Obey, ranking member, House Committee on Appropriations.

Remarks Prior to Discussions With President Ernesto Zedillo of Mexico and an Exchange With Reporters

November 14, 1997

Iraq

Q. Mr. President, are you willing to extend the no-fly zone across the remainder of Iraq?