

Message to the Congress Transmitting Proposed Freedom-To-Manage Legislation

October 17, 2001

To the Congress of the United States:

I am pleased to transmit for immediate consideration and prompt enactment the “Freedom to Manage Act of 2001.” This legislative proposal would establish a procedure under which the Congress can act quickly and decisively to remove those structural barriers to efficient management imposed by law and identified by my Administration.

This proposal is part of the “Freedom to Manage” initiative outlined in the “President’s Management Agenda” issued in late August. The initiative includes additional legislative proposals, to be transmitted separately, that would give Federal agencies and managers the tools to more efficiently and effectively manage the Federal Government’s programs by: (1) providing Federal managers with increased flexibility to manage personnel; (2) giving agencies the responsibility to fund the full Government share of the accruing cost of all retirement and retiree health care benefits for Federal employees; and (3) giving agencies greater flexibility in managing and disposing of property assets.

In transmitting the Freedom to Manage Act, I am asking the Congress to join with my Administration in making a commitment to reform the Federal Government by eliminating obstacles to its efficient operations. Specifically, the Freedom to Manage Act would establish a process for expedited congressional consideration of Presidential proposals to eliminate or reduce barriers to efficient Government operations through the repeal or amendment of laws that create obstacles to efficient manage-

ment or the provision of new authority to agencies.

The Freedom to Manage Act would provide that if the President transmits to the Congress legislative proposals relating to the elimination or reduction of barriers to efficient Government operations, either through repeal or amendment of current law or the provision of new authority, special expedited congressional procedures would be used to consider these proposals. If a joint resolution is introduced in either House within 10 legislative days of the transmittal containing the President’s legislative proposals, it would be held in committee for no more than 30 legislative days. It would then be brought to the floor of that House very quickly after committee action is completed for a vote under special procedures allowing for limited debate and no amendments. Finally, a bill passed in one House could then be brought directly to the floor of the other House for a vote on final passage.

As barriers to more efficient management are removed, the Nation will rightly expect a higher level of performance from its Federal Government. Giving our Federal managers “freedom to manage” will enable the Federal Government to improve its performance and accountability and better serve the public. I urge the Congress to give the Freedom to Manage Act 2001 prompt and favorable consideration so we can work together in the coming months to implement needed and overdue reforms.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
October 17, 2001.