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accordance with the law, the continued piecemeal legislative approach that addresses some victims and not others is neither equitable nor practicable. The Congress should develop a comprehensive proposal that provides compensation for all victims, following the principles my Administration outlined in June of this year. Such a proposal should not draw upon blocked assets to fund victim compensation, so as to preserve the prerogatives of the President in the area of foreign affairs.

Sections 321 and 322, which provide certain retirement benefits to discrete groups of Federal employees, undermine fundamental principles underlying Federal retirement systems. These sections introduce serious inequities in the operation of those systems, and set undesirable precedents. My Administration will submit to the Congress appropriate legislation to repeal section 321 and to adopt remedial legislation in lieu of section 322 that would not undermine the integrity, equity, and sound funding principles of our Federal retirement systems.

Section 1206 could be misconstrued to imply a change in the "one China" policy of the United States when, in fact, that U.S. policy remains unchanged. To the extent that this section could be read to purport to change United States policy, it impermissibly interferes with the President's constitutional authority to conduct the Nation's foreign affairs.

Section 1406 of the Act requires that actions to remove items from the munitions list be subject to reprogramming notifications to committees of Congress. By its plain terms, this provision does not subject such actions to any committee approval requirements, which would be impermissible under the constitutional separation of powers, and accordingly, the executive branch shall so implement it.

My approval of the Act does not constitute my adoption of the various statements of policy in the Act as U.S. foreign policy. Given the Constitution's commitment to the presidency of the authority to conduct the Nation's foreign affairs, the executive branch shall construe such policy statements as advisory, giving them the due weight that comity between the legislative and executive branches should require, to the extent consistent with U.S. foreign policy.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
September 30, 2002.

NOTE: H.R. 1646, approved September 30, was assigned Public Law No. 107–228.

Statement on Signing a Continuing Resolution for Fiscal Year 2003
September 30, 2002

Today I have signed into law H.J. Res. 111, a short-term continuing resolution for FY 2003. The resolution provides appropriations for continuing projects and activities of the Federal Government through October 4, 2002. It ensures that Government operations continue without interruption at their current operating level, creates no new programs, and contains no increases in spending.

Section 117 of the continuing resolution purports to prohibit all executive branch agencies from spending any funds made available under the continuing resolution "in violation of section 501 of title 44, United States Code." That section would require executive branch agencies to procure printing from the Government Printing Office, a legislative branch entity. The longstanding position of the executive

branch, memorialized in a May 1996 opinion by the Department of Justice, is that this language violates the constitutional principles of separation of powers and therefore is not binding on the executive branch. [*See* Memorandum from Walter Dellinger, Assistant Attorney General, to Emily C. Hewitt, General Counsel, General Services Administration, May 31, 1996.]

My Administration will continue to work with the Congress to ensure that sound fiscal principles are adhered to as we complete action on the FY 2003 appropriations bills.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
September 30, 2002.

NOTE: H.J. Res. 111, approved September 30, was assigned Public Law No. 107–229.

Remarks Following a Meeting With Congressional Leaders and an Exchange With Reporters
October 1, 2002

The President. Thank you all for coming. All of us here around the table are concerned about jobs, concerned about our economy. We want people to be able to find work. And we had a very good discussion about how Congress and the administration can work together to get a terrorism insurance bill done before Congress goes home. I asked the Members to get a—to work hard in the next couple of days and get an agreement by Friday. They're going to work hard to see if they can't come up with an agreement.

There's over $15.5 billion worth of construction projects which aren't going forward because they can't get insurance on their projects, can't insure the buildings or the project. And therefore, there's 300,000 people who—jobs aren't going forward. And this is a way for us to work together to put people back to work here in America. It's a really important piece of legislation. And I appreciate the spirit of both Republicans and Democrats, Senators and Congressmen, to get this thing done before they go home.

I'll answer a couple of questions. Laidlaw—Lindlaw [Scott Lindlaw, Associated Press], excuse me. Laidlaw—Lindlaw.

Alternative Resolution on Iraq

Q. Thank you, sir. There's a resolution being circulated by Senators Biden and Lugar, an alternative resolution on authorizing force in Iraq. What's wrong with that alternative?

The President. Well, I—first of all, I appreciate all the Members of Congress working to come up with a resolution. It sends a clear signal to the world that this country is determined to disarm Iraq and thereby bring peace to the world. Members of both parties are working to get a consensus. Secondly—and we'll continue to work with the Members of Congress. But I don't want to get a resolution which ties my hands, a resolution which is weaker than that which was passed out of the Congress in 1998. The Congress in 1998 passed a very strong resolution. They wisely recognized that Saddam Hussein is a threat—was a threat in '98, and he's more of a threat 4 years later.

My question is, what's changed? Why would Congress want to weaken the resolution? This guy's had 4 years to lie, deceive, to arm up. He's had 4 years to thumb his nose at the world. He is stockpiling more weapons. So I'm not sure why Members would like to weaken the resolution.