

NOTICE TO THE PRESS

The President has signed H. R. 16901--the Agriculture-Environmental and Consumer Protection Appropriation Act of 1975, which appropriates a total of \$13,389,851,000 for the activities of the Department of Agriculture (except the Forest Service); the Environmental Protection Agency; the Food and Drug Administration; the Consumer Product Safety Commission; the Federal Trade Commission; several small related agencies; and environmental, rural development, and consumer programs in other departments.

The first version of the bill, H. R. 15472, was vetoed on August 8, 1974--and later sustained--because it increased 1975 requests by \$150 million in budget outlays, \$400 million in transferred funds, and \$139 million in budget authority. Each of these total increases has been eliminated from the enrolled version of the bill. Most significantly, the effect of the bill on the 1975 outlays has been reduced from an increase of \$150 million in the vetoed bill to virtually no increase in the enrolled bill. The \$400 million transfer of unobligated Housing and Urban Development funds to EPA does not appear in the enrolled bill.

The appropriations in H. R. 16901 are \$181,544,000 less than provided in H. R. 15472 and \$58,683,100 less than the budget requests for the bill. The major significant decrease in budget authority in the bill--\$180 million for the Commodity Credit Corporation--is a "paper cut" which does not affect program levels.

Increases

Most budget authority increases are for Department of Agriculture programs.

-- The budget proposed consolidating several similar rural environmental programs into one program and shifting several annual contract programs to long-term contract programs. In the bill, Congress has added a net \$136.2 million for this group of programs by denying the consolidation and the shifts and reinstating several discontinued programs, some of which were terminated as early as 1970.

-- A net increase of \$42.3 million for the Farmers Home Administration includes increased funds for:

(MORE)

- 2 -

(dollars in millions)

Rural water and waste disposal grants	+30
Rural housing and domestic farm labor	+5
Mutual and self-help housing	+5
Rural community fire protection grants	+3

-- The bill also increases by more than \$270 million the loan programs of the Department of Agriculture. These increases do not add to budget authority, but they do increase both outlays and pressure on the credit markets. Of the increase, \$130 million is for the Rural Housing Insurance Fund and the Rural Development Insurance Fund. The remaining \$142 million increase--for Rural Electrification Administration loans--is off-budget, but adds strain to already-pressured credit markets.

Abatement and control programs of the Environmental Protection Agency were increased by \$18.8 million.

#### Decreases

The largest decrease in the bill is the "paper cut" of \$180 million for Agriculture's Commodity Credit Corporation. The cut will have to be restored at some later date. The only other major decrease in the bill is a reduction of \$57 million for the Environmental Protection Agency's energy research and development program which merely reflects savings resulting from the delayed enactment of this bill.

#### Other Provisions of the Bill

Section 510 prohibits the use of funds appropriated to the Environmental Protection Agency in this bill to administer any program to tax, limit, or otherwise regulate parking facilities. Congress took this action in response to increasing criticism of EPA's proposed regulations requiring Federal approval of proposals to build major parking facilities. EPA has now delayed implementing these Federal regulations for six months.

# # #