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JANUARY 4, 1975

Office of the White House Press Secretary

THE WHITE HOUSE

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

I have approved H.R. 10701, the Deepwater Ports Act of 1974.

Since taking office, I have urged on several occasions that the Congress give high priority to our Executive Branch request for legislation dealing with deepwater ports. I considered this an important step in our national effort to provide an adequate supply of energy at reasonable prices, and I therefore commend the 93rd Congress for completing work on the measure before adjournment.

Deepwater Ports can provide the safest, most efficient and least expensive means for transporting petroleum supplies that we obtain from foreign sources. This Act establishes the necessary legal framework for licensing the construction and operation of port facilities in naturally deep water distant from our coastlines where supertankers can unload their cargo into underwater pipelines.

Because of their immense capacity supertankers can reduce by nearly one-third the cost of hauling a barrel of oil. The use of deepwater ports also reduces the danger of oil spills since fewer conventional tankers would be required to deliver oil to our crowded inshore harbors. Our existing ports are not deep enough to handle supertankers safely and dredging existing ports can be very expensive as well as environmentally undesirable.

The Deepwater Ports Act is a significant addition to our program for supplying the Nation's energy needs. I am pleased to be able to sign it into law as one of my first acts of the new year.

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