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Office of the White House Press Secretary

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THE WHITE HOUSE

## STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

Although I have signed H.R. 17045, I am pleased with most of its provisions, but concerned about others.

The provisions concerning the Federal-State partnership program for social services successfully concludes many long months of negotiations among the Congress; the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare; governors; State administrators; and spokesmen for producers and consumers. Ending a long impasse, the efforts of all exemplify my call for communication, cooperation, conciliation and compromise when I assumed the office of President.

The second element of this bill involves the collection of child support payments from absent parents. I strongly agree with the objectives of this legislation.

In pursuit of this objective, however, certain provisions of this legislation go too far by injecting the Federal Government into domestic relations. Specifically, provisions for use of the Federal courts, the tax collection procedures of the Internal Revenue Service and excessive audit requirements are an undesirable and an unnecessary intrusion of the Federal Government into domestic relations. They are also an undesirable addition to the workload of the Federal courts, the IRS and the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare Audit Agency. Further, the establishment of a parent locator service in the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare with access to all Federal records raises serious privacy and administrative issues. I believe that these defects should be corrected in the next Congress and I will propose legislation to do so.

I am particularly pleased that this legislation follows a desirable trend in Federal-State relations. It will improve the results of programs previously hampered by unrealistic assumptions of Federal review and control. Those decisions related to local conditions and needs will be made at the State level, while Federal responsibilities are clearly delineated. Indeed, the interests of not only the Federal and State governments, but also producers and consumers are recognized and protected. I also believe that this new legislation significantly improves program accountability and focuses funds on those most in need of services.

In summary, I regard the social services provisions as a major piece of domestic legislation and a significant step forward in Federal-State relations.

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