

December 23, 1975

Office of the White House Press Secretary
(Vail, Colorado)

NOTICE TO THE PRESS

The President has signed H. R. 6851 - Annuity increase for former Lighthouse Service employees. This bill increases annuities of retired civilian Lighthouse Service employees by \$270 a year, effective January 1, 1976.

The bill will grant 285 civilian retirees of the former Lighthouse Service an annual annuity increase of \$270, starting in calendar year 1976. This increase is intended to parallel an annual increase of \$240 granted to comparable civil service retirees effective August 1, 1974. The extra \$30 reflects the two cost-of-living adjustments of 5.1% and 7.3% granted to civil service retirees during 1975.

The Lighthouse Service Retirement Act applies to a small group of civilian lighthouse keepers who were not converted to military status when the former Lighthouse Service was merged with the Coast Guard in 1939.

The President has signed S. 447 - "For the relief of Jesus Cortez Pineda" -- which grants preferential immigrant status to Jesus Cortez Pineda. The bill will classify Jesus Cortez Pineda as a "child" under the Immigration and Nationality Act upon approval of a petition filed in his behalf by Mr. and Mrs. David Pineda.

The President has signed H. R. 4865 - Use of Franked Mail -- which limits the use of mail franking privileges for former Vice Presidents, Members of Congress and certain officers of the Congress.

H. R. 4865 will limit the use of franked mail by former Vice Presidents, Members of Congress, and certain other officers of the Congress to materials on official business relating to the closing of their respective offices for a period of 90 days immediately following the date on which they leave office.

Under current law, such officials may use their franking privilege until the first day of April following the expiration of their terms of office. No distinction currently exists as to the types of mail that an incumbent or a former Member may send as franked. This bill would make such a distinction by limiting former officials' franking use to matters relating to the closing of their offices.

The bill will also authorize the Select Committee on Standards and Conduct of the Senate and the House Commission on Congressional Mailing Standards to prescribe any rules and regulations required to implement this amendment to the franking laws.

The President has signed H. R. 6642 - Allotments from civil service annuities. This bill allows civil service retirees to make voluntary allotments from annuity checks for savings bonds, bank accounts, and similar personal obligations, subject to Civil Service Commission (CSC) regulations.

The bill will permit voluntary allotment from retirement annuities for personal needs to the extent permitted by CSC regulation.

(MORE)

The President has signed S. 313 - Land exchange -- Guadalupe Mountains National Park, Texas.

This bill authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to make an exchange of lands at the Guadalupe Mountains National Park to facilitate the construction of an entrance road into the area.

The President has signed S. 1922 - Touchet Division, Walla Walla Project, Oregon-Washington -- which removes statutory requirement that the Fish and Wildlife Service of the Department of the Interior must obtain appropriations to finance the construction of the fish and wildlife enhancement facilities of the Touchet Division, Walla Walla Project, Oregon-Washington.

The President has signed H.R. 10555 - Relief of Mrika Mrnacaj -- which makes special grant of eligibility for naturalization as a United States citizen to an aged permanent resident alien.

The President has signed H.R. 2110 - for the relief of Joyce Ann Farrior and Sarah E. Farrior -- which provides for the payment of social security benefits to Joyce and Sarah Farrior by deeming Joyce Farrior to have been legally adopted by Sarah Farrior within the time period required by the Social Security Act.

The President has signed H.R. 8151 - Brigadier General Charles E. Yeager medal --- which authorizes the President to present a medal to Brigadier General Charles E. Yeager.

The bill authorizes the President to present, on behalf of the Congress, a silver medal, equivalent to a noncombat Medal of Honor, to Brigadier General Charles E. Yeager, United States Air Force. General Yeager risked his life in becoming the first person to break the sound barrier when he flew the XS-1 research airplane faster than the speed of sound on October 14, 1947.

The President has signed H.R. 1535 - Annuity increases for lighthouse widows --- which increases annuities of 343 widows of civilian lighthouse keepers by \$26 a month, effective January 1, 1976.

The President has signed H.R. 1753 - Census Enumeration Plans.

This bill facilitates the use of Bureau of the Census data by the States for use in legislative redistricting and apportionment.

H.R. 1753 will authorize State officials to submit to the Secretary of Commerce, not later than three years prior to the decennial census date, plans for identifying the geographic areas for which population tabulations are desired for legislative reapportionment and redistricting purposes.

The President has signed S. 2757 - National Wiretap Commission, which extends until April 30, 1976 the authority of the National Commission for the Review of Federal and State Laws Relating to Wiretapping and Electronic Surveillance.

The National Commission for the Review of Federal and State Laws Relating to Wiretapping and Electronic Surveillance is currently authorized through January 31, 1976. The purpose of the Commission is to conduct a comprehensive study and review of the Federal wiretapping law, authorized by the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 during its first six years and to review the operation of various State laws on the subject.

The President has signed H.R. 8773 - Department of the Interior and Related Agencies Appropriation Act, 1976, and the period ending September 30, 1976.

This bill appropriates for fiscal year 1976 and the transition quarter a total of \$5,390,159,900 in budget authority for activities of the Department of the Interior; the U.S. Forest Service (Agriculture); Indian health services (Health, Education, and Welfare); the Energy Research and Development Administration; the Federal Energy Administration; and certain small agencies.

The President has signed H.S. 10355 - Veterans and Survivors Pension Interim Adjustment Act of 1975 -- which provides cost-of-living increases and raises the income limitations in the veterans pension and dependents indemnity and compensation (DIC) programs for the first nine months of calendar year 1976.

H.R. 10355 will provide an 8% cost of living increase for the period January 1, 1976 to September 30, 1976 for veterans or their survivors who are receiving benefits under two VA income maintenance programs -- the veterans' pension program and the DIC program for parents of veterans who died of service-connected disabilities. It will also increase by \$300 the maximum income limitation used in determining eligibility under these programs. The benefits under both programs were last increased, by 12%, in January 1975 (P.L. 93-527).

The President has signed S. 848 - Mobile Home Loan ceilings and other housing amendments -- which increases the maximum insurable loan amounts for mobile homes; extends for one year, through December 31, 1976, the emergency flood insurance program; increases the maximum amounts for insurable mortgages for multifamily projects in high cost areas; authorizes the Federal share of the cost of the Kendall Square Urban Renewal Project in Cambridge, Massachusetts, to exceed the statutory maximum; and corrects a technical error in the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974.

Mobile Home Loans - S. 848 would raise the ceiling for mobile home loans eligible for Federal insurance under the National Housing Act from the present maximum of \$10,000 for a single module mobile home and \$15,000 for a multiple-module mobile home to \$12,500 and \$20,000, respectively.

(MORE)

Flood Insurance - S. 848 would extend the emergency implementation provisions of the flood insurance program for one year, from December 31, 1975 to December 31, 1976.

Mortgages for Multifamily Projects - S. 848 would authorize the Secretary of HUD to increase the limits for insurable mortgages for multifamily projects in high cost areas.

Kendall Square Project - S. 848 will provide that Federal capital grants for the urban renewal project at Kendall Square, Cambridge, Massachusetts, could exceed the statutory two-thirds maximum Federal share of project cost, and would limit the required local contribution to the initially agreed-upon amount.

Technical Amendment - S. 848 would eliminate the present statutory 10% ceiling on the number of dwelling units in projects insured under sections 221(d)(3) and 236 of the National Housing Act that may be occupied by non-elderly single persons.

The President has signed H.R. 9924 - National Women's Conference; which directs the National Commission on the Observance of International Women's Year, 1975, to organize and convene a National Women's Conference.

The basic purpose of H.R. 9924 is to provide for a National Women's Conference next year to assess the role of women and the progress made to date in promoting the equality of women. The conference will be charged with identifying the barriers preventing women from participating equally in all aspects of national life and developing recommendations for removing those barriers.

Under the bill, the conference would be organized and convened by the National Commission on the Observance of International Women's Year, 1975, which was established last January by Executive Order 11832, to promote national observance of International Women's Year, 1975 (IWY).

The President has signed H.R. 7976 - Restoration of certain annual leave to Federal employees -- which provides for restoration of all annual leave lost by Federal employees as a result of an unjustified or unwarranted personnel action.

Under present law, Federal employees generally cannot accumulate more than 30 days of annual leave. P.L. 93-181, approved December 14, 1973, provided for restoration of annual leave in excess of the 30-day maximum if such excess leave was lost because of administrative error or because the employee could not use the leave due to illness or exigencies of the public business. Such additional leave is maintained in a separate leave account and may be used in accordance with regulations prescribed by the Civil Service Commission.

H.R. 7976 will extend the same provisions to employees who are restored to duty following a period of separation resulting from an unjustified or unwarranted personnel action. Under the "Back Pay Act of 1966", such employees are deemed for all purposes to have performed service during the period of separation, except that they may not be credited with annual leave in excess of 30 days. The bill would rectify this inequity, effective as of March 30, 1966, when the Back Pay Act took effect.