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FEBRUARY 28, 1976

Office of the White House Press Secretary

THE WHITE HOUSE

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

The District of Columbia Self-Government and Governmental Reorganization Act (the Home Rule Act) provides that Acts of the D.C. Council which have been vetoed by the Mayor and overridden by a two-thirds vote of the Council shall be transmitted to the President for his review. The President shall then have thirty days in which to disapprove these Acts or allow them to become law.

D.C. Enrolled Acts 1-87, relating to affirmative action in D.C. government employment, and 1-88, relating to the so-called Shop-Book Rule of evidence, are the first such acts to be sent to the President for his review since the Home Rule Act was enacted.

If home rule for the District is to have real meaning, the integrity and responsibility of local government processes must be respected. The Federal government should intervene only where there is a clear and substantial Federal interest.

I have been advised by the Department of Justice that, in enacting Act 1-88, the D.C. Council exceeded the authority which the Congress had delegated to it under the Home Rule Act; therefore, I disapproved it. I have chosen not to disapprove Act 1-87, however, because, while I have serious reservations about the merits of the Act, I believe my disapproval of it would violate the sound precepts of home rule. The Federal interest involved here is not clear and substantial.

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