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SEPTEMBER 24, 1976

Office of the White House Press Secretary

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THE WHITE HOUSE

## STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

I welcome the opportunity to sign H.R. 8603, the Postal Reorganization Act Amendments of 1976, because it represents the concerted efforts of the Administration, the Congress, and the U.S. Postal Service to find a long-term solution to our postal problems.

This bill establishes a seven-member blue-ribbon Commission to study the broad range of problems confronting the United States Postal Service. The Commission will report to the Administration and the Congress by March 15 of next year with its recommended solutions to these problems. During this period, there will be a moratorium on post office closings, rate increases, and service cutbacks.

To assure the maintenance of the current financial status of the postal system, this bill also authorizes financial assistance to the U.S. Postal Service for the purpose of reducing its accumulated operating debt.

I am pleased by the responsible and effective bipartisan cooperation that was evident in the drafting and passage of this legislation. Senator McGee of Wyoming, Senator Fong of Hawaii, and Congressmen Henderson of North Carolina, Derwinski of Illinois, Hanley of New York, and Johnson of Pennsylvania were especially helpful contributors to this effort.

No one pretends that this bill itself insures the long-term solution to our postal problems. That will evolve over a period of time during and after completion of the Commission's study. But I believe this bill is a positive and constructive step toward that goal.

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