

OCTOBER 2, 1976

Office of the White House Press Secretary

NOTICE TO THE PRESS

The President has signed S. 2220--Reinstate an Oil and Gas Lease, New Mexico. This bill directs the Secretary of the Interior to consider a petition to reinstate oil and gas lease New Mexico 18302.

Under the Mineral Leasing Act, failure of a lessee to make rental payments on or before the anniversary date of any lease in which there is no well capable of active oil or gas production will cause the lease to be terminated.

S. 2220 will direct the Secretary of the Interior to receive, consider, and act upon any petition of Mr. Sol West, III, for reinstatement of oil and gas lease New Mexico 18302. The bill will require, within 90 days of enactment both the filing of such a petition and the payment of rental due, including that accruing from the date of termination of the lease.

The President has signed H. R. 589--Relief of the Santa Ynez Water Conservation District. This bill authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to relieve the Santa Ynez River Water Conservation District of repayment of a reclamation project loan to the extent of \$1,120 annually.

In 1960, the Santa Ynez River Water Conservation District received a Small Reclamation Projects loan from the Department of the Interior in the amount of \$3,800,000 to construct a water distribution system. The Santa Ynez Indian Reservation is located within the boundaries of the 10,000-acre Santa Ynez River Water Conservation District.

H. R. 589 will authorize the Secretary of the Interior to amend the repayment contract with the Santa Ynez River Water Conservation District to reduce by \$1,120 annually the amount due the United States. The bill will make the reduction effective on January 1 of the year following enactment, and it will remain in effect so long as the Indian reservation is in Federal ownership.

The President has signed H. R. 15068--Emergency Lease and Transfer of Tobacco Allotments. H. R. 15068 will amend existing law to authorize the Secretary to allow the lease and transfer of tobacco allotments across county lines, for 1976 only, in South Carolina and Georgia where, as a result of a natural disaster, one of the counties involved has suffered a loss of 10 percent or more in the number of acres of tobacco planted or in the expected production from the planted acreage. The bill will apply only to the owners or operators of farms which individually have suffered a loss of 10 percent or more in the number of acres planted or in the expected production from such acreage. Transfers could be made of all or any part of an allotment, but could be made only to another farm in the same State having a current allotment for the same kind of tobacco.

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