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OCTOBER 15, 1976

Office of the White House Press Secretary

THE WHITE HOUSE

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

I have approved H.R. 11347, a bill that would establish within the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, an Office of the Inspector General to conduct and supervise audits and investigations relating to the programs and operations of the Department.

Secretary Mathews and I share the concern of the Congress and of the American people for the honest and efficient conduct of government programs. Prior to the passage of this legislation, the Secretary had moved to establish a centralized investigative arm within his own office to give effect to this concern. The new law will now enable me to appoint an Inspector General for the Department. Under the Secretary's supervision, the Inspector General will lead the Department's investigative activities. He will keep the Secretary and the Congress appropriately informed on the necessity and progress of action needed to correct program abuse or assure the economical and efficient management of the Department's programs.

In implementing this law, I want to emphasize my complete agreement with the intent of the Congress, as expressed in the bill, that the Inspector General and his Deputy be appointed solely on the basis of integrity and demonstrated ability, without regard to political affiliation.

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