



EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503

September 17, 2009
(Senate)

STATEMENT OF ADMINISTRATION POLICY

H.R. 2996 — Department of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies

Appropriations Act, 2010

(Sen. Inouye, D-Hawaii)

The Administration strongly supports Senate passage of H.R. 2996, with the Senate Committee-reported bill, making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2010.

The bill makes efficient and effective investments that protect and enhance America's natural and historical treasures, from our forests to our lakes and our monuments. It also funds critical activities to protect the health of the American people, the environment in which we live, and the modernized 21st Century infrastructure that is vital to our economy.

The Administration would like to take this opportunity to share additional views regarding specific provisions in the Committee's version of the bill.

Administration Priorities

Environmental Protection Agency. The Administration appreciates the Committee's inclusion of \$400 million for the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, but urges the Congress to fully fund the President's request of \$475 million. The Administration also commends the Committee for fully funding the remaining two Water Security pilot projects. The lessons learned from these pilot projects will provide water systems nationwide with tools to effectively protect their critical water infrastructure.

Wildland Fires. The Administration appreciates the support of the Committee in providing requested funding amounts for wildfire suppression operations and amounts equal to the request for the new Wildland Fire Suppression Contingency Reserve of the Department of Agriculture Forest Service and the Department of the Interior. However, the Administration has significant concerns about merging Contingency Reserves funding into the base fire programs of the agencies.

Indian Health Service. The Administration appreciates the Committee's support for the President's initiative to expand health care services through the Indian Health Service, but urges the Congress to remove a provision that restricts the ability of Alaska Natives to decide if they will administer the programs that benefit their communities.

Efficiencies and Cost-Saving Proposals. The Administration appreciates the Committee's support for proposed reductions, including the termination of grants for local water infrastructure that have achieved their purpose. The Administration urges the Congress to adopt the President's other

proposals, especially for those items that fund narrowly focused activities or duplicate existing programs that accomplish similar goals.

Department of the Interior

The Administration appreciates the Committee's support for climate change funding for the Interior Department but strongly encourages the Congress to fully fund the request, including \$40 million to help States plan and implement activities to help wildlife adapt to the impacts of climate change.

The Administration urges the Congress to provide the \$30 million increase requested for programs to help teach youth about conservation through outdoor activities, such as hunting and fishing. The Administration also suggests that the Congress fund Park Partnership project grants as requested, to leverage non-Federal dollars and engage partners in preparation for the 100th anniversary of the National Park System.

The Congress is urged not to include a provision that will allow Federal funding through the Office of Surface Mining to be used as non-Federal cost share funds for other agency programs. Under this provision, the Federal Government would in effect bear the full cost of projects, in essence waving cost share.

Department of Agriculture (USDA)

The Administration appreciates the Committee's support of our national forests but has concerns with the Committee's decision to transfer funds to the National Forest System account rather than provide funding for the President's Protecting National Forests Initiative. The Administration urges the Congress to fully fund the request in order to permit greater flexibility in protecting natural resources and maintaining facilities.

The Administration appreciates the Committee's support of funding for the USDA Forest Service portion of the Land and Water Conservation Fund, but urges the Congress to fully fund the Forest Legacy program component. The Budget reflects broad support of forest-based economic development and the Administration encourages the Congress to reconsider its approach to the Economic Action Program, which is duplicative of other Federal programs.

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