

Ninety-Fourth Congress

Jan. 14, 1975-Oct. 1, 1976

Administration of Gerald R. Ford

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Historical Background

In his 1975 State of the Union address, President Ford reported that the State of the Union was not good. The United States's involvement in the long-simmering conflict in Vietnam was winding down towards an ignoble conclusion. Millions of Americans were out of work. Recession and inflation were eroding the money of millions more. Prices were high and sales were slow. The Federal deficit was increasing, driving up the national debt. President Ford asked Congress to approve a one-year tax reduction for individuals and businesses. He vowed that he would veto any new spending programs sent to his desk by the Congress, with the exception of energy programs, and recommended a 5% percent limit for Federal pay increases and all Government programs tied to the consumer price index. Ford proposed several energy initiatives intended to make American invulnerable to the whims of the OPEC petroleum cartel.

As one of its first orders of business in 1975, the 94th Congress quickly approved an emergency \$22.8 billion tax reduction on March 26. In December the tax cuts were extended for an additional six months. The Tax Reform Act of October 1976 imposed new curbs on investments in tax shelters, increased taxes on the wealthy, made important changes in estate and gift taxation, and repealed and revised obsolete sections in the U.S. Tax Code.

Late in May 1975, some three weeks after the North Vietnamese and Viet Cong took control of all South Vietnam, Congress sent to the President legislation appropriating \$405 million for the resettlement of more than 100,000 Vietnamese and Cambodian refugees in the United States. A year later the same assistance was authorized for Laotian refugees' transportation and resettlement expenses and reimbursements to the States for health, education, and public assistance expenses.

| House | Senate |
|--|--|
| Majority Party: Democrat (291 seats) | Majority Party: Democrat (61 seats) |
| Minority Party: Republican (144 seats) | Minority Party: Republican (37 seats) |
| Other Parties: none | Other Parties: Conservative (1 seat); Independent (1 seat) |
| Speaker of the House: Carl Albert | Majority Leader: Mike Mansfield |

Amid rapidly increasing national unemployment, Congress in mid-June 1975 appropriated \$473,350,000 for an estimated 840,000 summer jobs for youth. Less than two weeks later, \$1.625 billion was appropriated for public service jobs. Appropriations for extension of the emergency public service jobs program were approved October 1976.

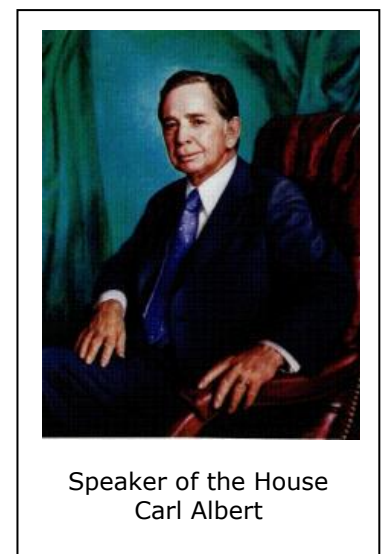
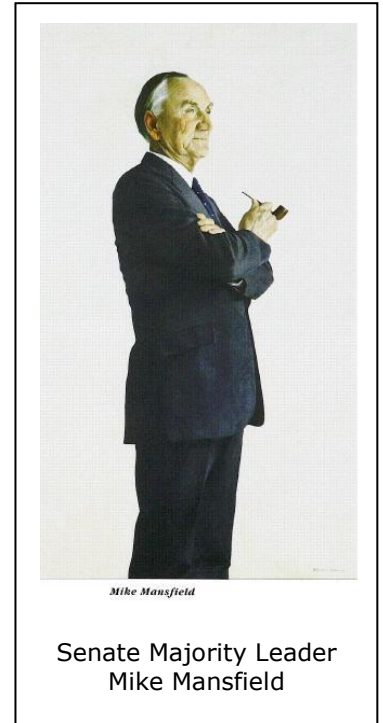
Following seven months of congressional consideration, and a Presidential veto, an extension of the school lunch and other child nutrition programs was enacted on October 7, 1975. On December 23, 1975, the President signed into law a bill establishing a 17-member U.S. Metric Board to help coordinate the voluntary conversion to the metric system in the United States.

Perhaps no issue consumed more of Congress's time in 1975-76 than energy legislation. In his 1976 State of the Union Address, President Ford stressed the need for additional legislative action to decrease U.S. dependence on high-priced foreign oil. He believed that the December 1975 Energy and Conservation Act set in "place the first elements of a comprehensive national energy policy." Within the next two weeks, work was also completed on a new Energy Research and Development Administration. Federal energy standards, energy conservation and recovery incentives were formalized during the next ten months. In October 1976 Congress overrode the President's veto (and the opposition of the coal industry) to enact the Federal Coal Leasing Amendments Act, which revised the procedures for leasing and developing Federal coal deposits.

Late in March 1976, Congress cleared legislation extending the 12-mile exclusive U.S. fishing zone of the nation's coastline to 200 miles. Three months later, a \$1.2 billion program of Federal aid to States was approved to assist them in dealing with the effects of increased offshore gas and oil development resulting from the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972. On October 21, the President signed a statutory mandate for the Bureau of Land Management to administer all Federal lands within its jurisdiction. The following day, action was completed on a bill authorizing \$742.3 million for water resource projects beginning in fiscal 1978, and Federal guidelines agreed upon for the practice of clear-cutting in National Forests.

In May 1976, an Office of Science and Technology was established in the Executive Office of the President as required by legislation approved by Congress. President Ford signed a new election campaign act on May 11, 1976, after the Supreme Court had ruled the previous January that the method of appointing of commissioners to the Federal Elections Commission violated the Constitution's separation-of-powers clause because some commissioners had been named by congressional officials but exercised executive powers.

Legislation was approved for the first time in June 1976 authorizing congressional review of commercial U.S. arms sales to foreign nations. That September, funds were appropriated for procurement of the Air Force's B-1 Bomber in such a way that the winner of the November Presidential election



could make the final decision on whether to proceed with production of the plane.

Proponents of a more open government were able in September 1976 to gain approval for the "sunshine" law requiring Federal agencies to open their meetings to the public. Culminating 15 years of legislative debate involving a myriad of special interest groups, Congress a month later enacted the first comprehensive revision of U.S. copyright laws since 1909. Hoping to resolve yet another subtle form of discrimination in the United States, Congress vastly expanded Federal aid for education of the handicapped. In October 1976, an extensive overhaul of Federal funding aid to higher and vocational education was approved.

Other important measures approved by the 94th Congress provided the aid necessary to prevent New York City from going bankrupt, a \$25.6 billion extension of the Federal revenue sharing program, and a \$2.1 billion appropriation for the initial expenses of ConRail. Congress also granted approval to a covenant granting U.S. Commonwealth status to the Northern Mariana Islands in the Pacific and set national controls on potentially toxic substances.

Sources:

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Ford, Gerald R. [*President's Report on the State of the Union, Message from the President*](#). House, Jan. 15, 1975. 94th Congress, 1st Session, H. Doc. 94-1. ProQuest Congressional, 13109-1 H.doc.1

Ford, Gerald R. [*State of the Union, Message from the President*](#). House, Jan. 19, 1976. 94th Congress, 2nd Session, H. Doc. 94-330. ProQuest Congressional, 13145-1 H.doc.330

War or Peace?

The Fall of Saigon and the End of U.S. Involvement in Wars in Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia

The decision of Congress in 1975 to reject the Administration's request for additional military assistance to South Vietnam and Cambodia completed a two-year decline in congressional support for American military aid to the non-communist states of Indochina. By early January, Communist Khmer Rouge forces had cut all land supply routes into the Cambodian capital city Phnom Penh and made increasingly difficult U.S.-directed efforts to supply Phnom Penh by way of Mekong River convoys. On March 10, North Vietnamese forces launched major attacks in the central highlands of South Vietnam. By the end of the first week in April, North Vietnam controlled approximately two-thirds of South Vietnam. On Apr. 30, South Vietnam surrendered to the Communists and President Ford sent American troops

into the Saigon area to assist in the evacuation of U.S. and certain foreign nationals. Shortly after South Vietnam's surrender, the Communist Pathet Lao took effective control of the Government of Laos.

Source:

Goodman, Margaret. [Congress and Foreign Policy-1975](#). Foreign Affairs and National Defense Division (CRS), Aug. 1, 1976. 94th Congress, 2nd Session, 76-H462-36. ProQuest Congressional, CRS-1976-FND-0020

Economic Trends and Conditions

At the beginning of 1975, the U.S. economy was in worse condition than it had been at any time since 1946. In Feb. 1975, seven and a half million workers were without jobs and the official employment rate stood at 8.2%, a number that does not reflect the fact that growing numbers had ceased looking for work.

In the second half of 1975, the U.S. economy began to recover from the worst recession in the postwar period. Although displaying an erratic quarterly pace, the growth of real GNP averaged 7.3% during the first year of recovery. In the last three quarters of 1976, however, the economy lost its momentum. Real GNP growth dropped to an annual rate of only 3.6. The unemployment rate dropped from 7.7% in January to 7.3% in May, but returned to 7.8% in July and remained at that high level or above throughout the rest of the year.

Inflation abated somewhat in 1976, but the economic was slowed by sluggish business capital spending. In 1976 business fixed investment, adjusted for inflation, increased only 3.8%.

Sources:

Bolling, Richard Walker. [Joint Economic Report 1977](#). Committee on Economic. Joint, Mar. 15, 1977. 95th Congress, 1st Session, H. Rpt. 95-75. ProQuest Congressional, 13174-1 H.rp.75

Humphrey Jr., Hubert Horatio. [1976 Joint Economic Report](#). Committee on Economic. Joint, Mar. 10, 1976. 94th Congress, 2nd Session, S. Rpt. 94-690. ProQuest Congressional, 13133-2 S.rp.690

Humphrey Jr., Hubert Horatio. [1975 Joint Economic Report](#). Committee on Economic. Joint, Mar. 26, 1975. 94th Congress, 1st Session, S. Rpt. 94-61. ProQuest Congressional, 13098-1 S.rp.61

Landmark U.S. Supreme Court Decisions

Cousins v. Wigoda, held that the Democratic National Convention of 1972 was within its rights to keep certain Illinois delegates, who were elected in violation of the rights of the petitioners, from being seated at the Convention, 419 U.S. 477 (1975)

Goss v. Lopez, held that students have a right to free public education which cannot be taken away by school officials through suspensions, even temporarily, without due process of law, 419 U.S. 565 (1975)

Wood v. Strickland, held that school board members can be held liable for damages if they knew or reasonably should have known that the action they took would violate the constitutional rights of the student affected, or if they took the action with a malicious intent to deprive the student of constitutional rights or cause other injury, 420 U.S. 308 (1975)

Cox Broadcasting Corp. v. Cohn, held that a Georgia statute keeping the media from identifying rape victims in their broadcasts was in violation of freedom of press, 420 U.S. 469 (1975)

Weinberger v. Wiesenfeld, held that gender-based difference in Social Security benefits for widows and widowers were in violation of the Due Process Clause, 420 U.S. 636 (1975)

Alyeska Pipeline Service Co. v. Wilderness Society, held that the Federal courts have no general equitable power to award attorney's fees unless there is a specific statutory authorization, a "common fund" or "common benefit" situation, or bad faith or vexatious conduct by one of the parties, 421 U.S. 240 (1975)

Eastland v. U.S. Servicemen's Fund, held that a subpoena from the Senate Subcommittee on Internal Security for financial records of the United States Servicemen's Fund were within its rights and did not violate the First Amendment, 421 U.S. 491 (1975)

Michelin Tire Corp. V. Wages, affirmed the decision of the lower courts that a property tax levied on the stored contents of a tire warehouse were not in violation of the Import-Export Clause, 423 U.S. 276 (1976)

Buckley v. Valeo, held that Congress may enact legislation providing for public funding of election campaigns that conditions acceptance of public funds on candidate adherence to specified eligibility requirements which may otherwise be unconstitutional, 424 U.S. 1 (1976)

Hills v. Gautreaux, held that housing programs that fund and build public housing in primarily African-American concentrated neighborhoods are racially discriminatory and violate the Fifth Amendment and the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 425 U.S. 284 (1976)

Virginia State Board of Pharmacy v. Virginia Citizens Consumer, held that a ban on the advertising of prices of prescription drugs by licensed pharmacists was in violation of the First Amendment, 425 U.S. 748 (1976)

Washington v. Davis, held that certain procedures and written tests that were used for recruitment to the DC Police Department were not racially discriminatory under the Equal Protection Clause, 426 U.S. 229 (1976)

National League of Cities v. Usery, held that amendments to the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, which affected minimum wage and overtime pay, were unconstitutional, as Congress is not permitted to control the labor market of state employees, 426 U.S. 833 (1976)

Runyon v. McCrary (Virginia Private School Cases), held that private schools were prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race when determining admission, 427 U.S. 160 (1976)

Nebraska Press Assn. V. Stuart, held that a trial judge could not keep members of the press from publishing accounts of confessions in a murder case, as it would violate the First and Fourteenth Amendments, 427 U.S. 539 (1976)

Gregg v. Georgia (Capital Punishment Cases), held that a death sentence in the case of murder is not in violation of the Eighth and Fourteenth Amendments as cruel and unusual punishment, 428 U.S. 153 (1976)

Woodson v. North Carolina (Capital Punishment Cases), struck down a North Carolina law on the grounds that a statute making mandatory the imposition of capital punishment for certain homicide offences violates the cruel and unusual punishment clause, 428 U.S. 280 (1976)

Roberts v. Louisiana (Capital Punishment Cases), struck down a Louisiana law on the grounds that a statute making mandatory the imposition of capital punishment for certain homicide offences violates the cruel and unusual punishment clause 428 U.S. 325 (1976)

Stone v. Powell, held that habeas corpus relief would not be granted in cases where the accused was granted a trial which examines Fourth Amendment claims, such as in this case where the defendant claimed unlawful search and seizure, 428 U.S. 465 (1976)

Craig et al. v. Boren, Governor of Oklahoma, et al. held unconstitutional an Oklahoma law involving an age-sex differentiation in the sale of 3.2% beer by defining minors as women under the age of 18 and men under the age of 21, 429 U.S. 190 (1976)

General Electric v. Gilbert, held employee benefit plans non-discriminatory under title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, despite exclusion of pregnancy disability coverage, 429 U.S. 125 (1976)

Source:

Costello, George A. and Johnny H. Killian. [*Constitution of the United States of America, Analysis and Interpretation*](#). CRS, Library of Congress, Jan. 1, 1996. 103rd Congress, 1st Session, S. Doc. 103-6 (Y1.1/3:103-6). ProQuest Congressional, 14152 S.doc.6

1975 Events

- **Jan. 29:** [State Department building in D.C. is bombed by members of the Weather Underground domestic terrorist group](#)
- **Feb. 11:** [Margaret Thatcher defeats Edward Heath for the leadership of the opposition UK Conservative Party, becoming the first female leader of any British political party](#)
- **Mar. 10:** *Vietnam War* - [North Vietnamese troops attack Ban Mê Thuột, South Vietnam, on their way to capturing Saigon](#)
- **Mar. 13:** *Vietnam War* - South Vietnamese President Nguyễn Văn Thiệu orders the Central Highlands evacuated, leading to a mass exodus involving troops and civilians
- **Mar. 25:** [King Faisal of Saudi Arabia is shot and killed by his nephew](#)
- **Apr. 17:** [Phnom Penh falls to Khmer Rouge communist insurgents, effectively ending the Cambodian Civil War](#)
- **Apr. 18:** [The Khmer Rouge begin a forcible mass evacuation of the Cambodian capital Phnom Penh](#)
- **Apr. 30:** *Vietnam War - Fall of Saigon* - [Saigon falls to the North Vietnamese Army, effectively ending the Vietnam War](#)
- **May 12:** [U.S. merchant ship SS Mayaguez seized by Cambodian armed forces in international waters off of the coast of Cambodia](#)
- **May 15:** [U.S. military forces use force and suffer some loss of life to regain possession of the Mayaguez; the crew of the Mayaguez is released](#)
- **June 20:** JAWS is released in theatres and becomes a popular summer hit, setting the standard for Hollywood blockbusters for decades to come
- **June 26:** [Two FBI agents and one American Indian Movement \(AIM\) die in a shootout at the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota](#)
- **Aug. 8:** The Banqiao Dam in China's Henan Province fails after Typhoon Nina, killing over 200,000 people
- **Sep. 5:** [Charles Manson Family member, Lynette "Squeaky" Fromme, attempts to assassinate President Gerald Ford but is thwarted by a Secret Service agent](#)
- **Sep. 5:** [U.S. President Gerald Ford survives a second assassination attempt, this time by Sara Jane Moore in San Francisco](#)
- **Oct. 11:** NBC airs the first episode of Saturday Night Live
- **Dec. 2:** Laotian Coalition government forms the Lao People's Democratic Republic

1976 Events

- **Jan. 15:** Sara Jane Moore is sentenced to life in prison for the attempted assassination of President Ford
- **Jan. 21:** [Supersonic Concorde flights are commercially scheduled for selected routes, cutting trans-Atlantic flights to 3.5 hours](#)
- **Feb. 4:** [A magnitude 7.5 earthquake strikes Guatemala](#)

- **Mar. 20:** Patty Hearst is convicted of armed bank robbery, and sentenced with up to 35 years of imprisonment
- **Apr. 1:** Steve Jobs and Steve Wozniak create Apple Computer, Inc.
- **Apr. 5:** [Howard Hughes, businessman, pilot, engineer, film director, and philanthropist, dies from kidney failure](#)
- **May 11:** [The Federal Election Campaign Act Amendments change the conditions and terms of FEC membership, and impose new contribution limits](#)
- **June 1:** [A Syrian task force enters Lebanon to halt fighting between Lebanese warring factions, prompting the PLO to issue a statement charging that the invasion was the beginning of a Syrian occupation of Israel](#)
- **June 5:** [Teton Dam in Eastern Ohio collapses](#)
- **June 16:** [U.S. Ambassador to Lebanon, Francis Meloy, is kidnapped and murdered in Beirut](#)
- **June 20:** [A U.S. Navy landing craft evacuates 263 Americans and Europeans from Lebanon](#)
- **June 27:** [Palestinian terrorists hijack an Air France jetliner during a flight between Tel Aviv and Paris and fly it with passengers and crew to Entebbe Airport in Uganda](#)
- **July 4:** [An Israeli army spokesman in Tel Aviv announces that an Israeli commando force had successfully rescued 103 Jewish and French hostages held at Entebbe Airport, Uganda](#)
- **July 4:** [The United States celebrates the bicentennial of the signing of the Declaration of Independence](#)
- **July 20:** [Viking 1 successfully lands on Mars, taking never before seen photos of its surface](#)
- **July 27:** A U.S. Navy landing craft evacuates 308 persons, including American embassy personnel, from Lebanon in an organized final departure, leaving only a skeletal embassy staff of 15, including 12 Marines in Beirut
- **July 29:** Son of Sam serial killer attacks begin in New York City
- **Aug. 4:** [First outbreak of Legionnaire's disease occurs in Philadelphia](#)
- **Aug. 11:** [Terrorist attack at Yesilkoy Airport in Istanbul, Turkey, resulting in 4 deaths, including the death of Harold Rosenthal, a staff aide to Senator Jacob Javits](#)
- **Aug. 23:** Airliner at Luxor Airport in Egypt is hijacked, but Egyptian paratroopers successfully rescue all passengers and crew held hostage
- **Sept. 9:** [Chinese Communist Party Chairman Mao Zedong dies](#)
- **Sept. 13:** [Government in the Sunshine Act promises greater transparency to the public by holding open meetings](#)
- **Sept. 29:** Belgian Doctor, Peter Piot, discovers Ebola virus, from blood samples of a nun working with the outbreak victims in Zaire (Democratic Republic of Congo). A second major outbreak occurs in Sudan
- **Nov. 2:** Jimmy Carter is elected President of the United States

Sources:

Carter, Jimmy. [*Transferring certain bicentennial functions to the Secretary of the Interior.*](#) Numbered Executive Orders, 1862-Present, June 29, 1977. Executive Order No. 12001. ProQuest Congressional, 1977-EO-12001

[*Chronologies of Major Developments in Selected Areas of International Relations, Cumulative Edition, January-December 1975.*](#) Committee on International Relations. House. Jan. 1, 1975. 94th Congress, 1st Session, 76-H462-3. ProQuest Congressional, CMP-1975-HIR-0001

Committee on Government Operations. House; Committee on Government Operations. Senate. [*Government in the Sunshine Act.*](#) GPO. Aug. 5, 1976. 94th Congress, 2nd Session, 94 HGov-T.64. ProQuest Congressional, HRG-1976-OPH-0065

Ford, Gerald R. [*Supplemental Appropriation for Payment of Claims Resulting from the Teton Dam Failure. Communication from the President.*](#) Committee on Appropriations. House, Sept. 20, 1976. 94th Congress, 2nd Session, H. Doc. 94-617. ProQuest Congressional, 13145-4 H.doc.617

["Israel Commended for Ugandan Raid."](#) Congressional Record, 94th Congress, 2nd Session (July 19, 1976) Vol. 122, p. 22713. ProQuest Congressional, CR-1976-0719

["Mao Tse-Tung."](#) Congressional Record, 94th Congress, 2nd Session (Sept. 14, 1976) Vol. 122, pp. 30271-30272. Congressional Record, CR-1976-0914

["Newsweek and Time Magazines Glorification of Attempted Assassin Lynette Fromme."](#) Congressional Record, 94th Congress, 1st Session (Sept. 10, 1975) Vol. 121, p. 28268. ProQuest Congressional, CR-1975-0910

["The Remarkable Mrs. Thatcher: A New Leader of Principle."](#) Congressional Record, 94th Congress, 1st Session (Mar. 18, 1975) Vol. 121, pp. 7201-7202. ProQuest Congressional, CR-1975-0318

["Senate Resolution 524—Submission of a Resolution Regarding the Recent Terrorist Attack at Istanbul Airport."](#) Congressional Record, 94th Congress, 2nd Session (Aug. 26, 1976) Vol. 122, pp. 27924-27929. ProQuest Congressional, CR-1976-0826

["The Silent Partner of Howard Hughes—Part XVII."](#) Congressional Record, 94th Congress, 2nd Session (Apr. 8, 1976) Vol. 122, pp. 10194-10195. ProQuest Congressional, CR-1976-0408

Special Subcommittee on Investigations, Committee on International Relations. House. [*Assassination of American Diplomats in Beirut, Lebanon.*](#) GPO, July 27, 1976. 94th Congress, 2nd Session, 76-H461-65. ProQuest Congressional, HRG-1976-HIR-0049

Subcommittee on Consumer Protection and Finance, Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce. House. [*"Legionnaires' Disease."*](#) GPO, Nov. 23-24, 1976. 94th Congress, 2nd Session, 77-H501-37 (Y4.In8/4:94-159). ProQuest Congressional, HRG-1976-FCH-0035

Subcommittee on Foreign Assistance, Committee on Foreign Relations. Senate. [*Guatemala Earthquake.*](#) Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere Affairs, Committee on Foreign Relations. Senate., Feb. 16, 1976. 94th Congress, 2nd Session, 76-S381-8. ProQuest Congressional, HRG-1976-FOR-0028

Subcommittee on Government Activities and Transportation, Committee on Government Operations. House. [*Review of the Secretary of Transportation's Decision on the SST Concorde.*](#) Subcommittee on Future Foreign Policy Research and Development, Committee on International Relations. House, May 26, 1976. 94th Congress, 2nd Session, 76-H401-61. ProQuest Congressional, HRG-1976-OPH-0036

Subcommittee on Internal Security, Committee on the Judiciary. Senate. [State Department Bombing by Weatherman Underground](#). Senate, Jan. 31, 1975. 94th Congress, 1st Session, 75-5521-17 (Y4.J89/2:B63). ProQuest Congressional, HRG-1975-SJS-0057

Subcommittee on Space Science and Applications, Committee on Science and Technology. House. [Briefing on Mars Exploration](#). GPO, Sept. 29, 1976. 94th Congress, 2nd Session, 77-H701-28. ProQuest Congressional, HRG-1976-TEC-0017

Subcommittee on Treasury, U.S. Postal Service, and General Government Appropriations, Committee on Appropriations. Senate. [Review of Secret Service Protective Measures, FY76, Special Hearing](#). Senate, Sept. 30, 1975. 94th Congress, 1st Session, 75-S181-64. ProQuest Congressional, HRG-1975-SAP-0061

["United Church of Christ Concerns for General Amnesty and the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation."](#) Congressional Record, 94th Congress, 1st Session (Sept. 10, 1975) Vol. 121, p. 28560. ProQuest Congressional, CR-1975-0910

Yadlosky, Elizabeth. [List of Amendments Made by Federal Election Campaign Act Amendments of 1976-- Public Law 94-283](#). American Law Division (CRS), June 1, 1976. 94th Congress, 2nd Session, 76-109 A. ProQuest Congressional, CRS-1976-AML-0025

Major Acts

Tax Reduction Act of 1975. Provided \$22.8 billion in individual and business tax cuts, along with \$1.9 billion in special countercyclical Government spending. Increased the business tax credit, cut back the oil and gas depletion allowance, and curbed foreign oil tax benefits. Approved Mar. 29, 1975. ([89 Stat. 26; PL94-12](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

Cambodian and Vietnamese Refugees Special Assistance Appropriation. Appropriated \$405 million for the remainder of fiscal 1975 and for fiscal 1976 for the resettlement of more than 100,000 refugees from Cambodia and Vietnam. This money was to be used to pay for their transportation, initial care and lodging in the United States, and social services such as vocational and language training, medical care and welfare that they might require later. Approved May 23, 1975. ([89 Stat. 89; PL94-24](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

Summer Youth Employment and Recreation Supplemental Appropriations Act. Appropriated \$473,350,000 for an estimated 840,000 summer jobs for youth, primarily in Government. Approved June 16, 1975. ([89 Stat. 215; PL94-36](#))

United Nations Payments for Peacekeeping Forces. Authorized appropriations to make payments to fund United Nations peacekeeping operations in the Middle East. Approved June 19, 1975. ([89 Stat. 216; PL94-37](#))

Continuing Appropriations, FY 1976 (Jobs Programs). Appropriated as part of a routine continuing appropriations measures was \$1.625 million for public service jobs; \$375 million for emergency public works projects; \$119.8 million for the college work-study program; \$70 million for the Work Incentive program for welfare recipients; \$30 million for an employment

program for the elderly; and \$10 million for the Youth Conservation Corps. Approved June 27, 1975. ([89 Stat. 225; PL94-41](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

National School Lunch Act and Child Nutrition Act of 1966 Amendments of 1975. Extended all the non-school food programs, including a supplemental feeding program for mothers and their young children, and made the school breakfast program permanent. Also expanded the school lunch and breakfast programs to include children's residential institutions, increased the income eligibility level of reduced-priced lunches, and made children of unemployed parents eligible for reduced-price lunches. Approved Oct. 7, 1975. ([89 Stat. 511; PL94-105](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975. Required States to provide a free, adequate education to all their handicapped children by September 1, 1978, and provided funds for State programs. Provided additional special incentive grants to States for education of preschool handicapped children aged 3 to 5. Approved Nov. 29, 1975. ([89 Stat. 773; PL94-142](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

New York City Seasonal Financing Act of 1975. Allowed the Secretary of the Treasury to make Federal loans of up to \$2.3 billion a year through mid-1978 to help New York City meet its seasonal cash needs. Required the city to repay the loans and interest of about 8 percent by June 30 of each year. Enactment of the legislation ended, at least temporarily, a harrowing string of money crises for the Nation's largest city. Approved Dec. 9, 1975. ([89 Stat. 797; PL94-143](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

Energy Policy and Conservation Act. Established a national energy policy designed to maximize domestic production of energy and provide for strategic storage reserves of oil and petroleum products; minimize the impact of disruptions in energy supplies by providing for emergency standby measures; provide for a level of domestic oil prices which would both encourage production and not impede economic recovery; and reduce domestic energy consumption through voluntary and mandatory energy conservation plans. Approved Dec. 22, 1975. ([89 Stat. 871; PL94-163](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

Revenue Adjustment Act of 1975. Continued the tax cuts of the Tax Reduction Act of 1975 for an additional 6 months and pledged that Congress would cut fiscal 1977 outlays dollar for dollar if the tax cuts were extended again. Still, Congress reserved the right to ignore that commitment if it concluded through the budget process that changing economic conditions or other circumstances required higher or lower spending levels. Approved Dec. 23, 1975. ([89 Stat. 970; PL94-164](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

Metric Conversion Act of 1975. Established a national policy of U.S. metric conversion and a 17-member U.S. Metric Conversion Board to assist and coordinate the voluntary conversion to the metric system of weights and measurement in the United States. Approved Dec. 23, 1975. ([89 Stat. 1007; PL94-168](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

Energy Research and Development Administration Appropriation Authorization Act. Provided for a \$5 billion appropriation for the new Energy Research and Development Administration for fiscal 1976 and a proportional amount, \$1.27 billion for the transitional quarter. Of this total, \$4 billion was for nuclear programs. Approved Dec. 31, 1975. ([89 Stat. 1063; PL94-187](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

Railroad Revitalization and Regulatory Reform Act of 1976 (4-R Act). Authorized the United States Railway Association to purchase up to \$2.1 billion of ConRail securities. Established a Finance Committee composed of the Secretaries of Transportation and Treasury and the Chairman of the USRA. Provided for a Special Court to adjudicate any supplemental transfer or restructuring of rail properties in the Northeast and Midwest region, and Federal assistance for passenger service in the Northeast corridor and local rail service continuation. Approved Feb. 5, 1976. ([90 Stat. 31; PL94-210](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

Equal Credit Opportunity Act Amendments of 1976. Outlawed credit discrimination on the basis of age, race, color, religion or national origin. Amended the 1974 Equal Credit Opportunity Act which banned discrimination based on sex or marital status. Approved Mar. 23, 1976. ([90 Stat. 251; PL94-239](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands Establishment Act. Granted commonwealth status to the Northern Mariana Islands in the Pacific. Agreement provided for self-government of the islands, but reserved to the United States complete control over their foreign affairs and defense. Federal income taxes and other levies paid by the islanders were to be returned to the islanders. Approved Mar. 24, 1976. ([90 Stat. 263; PL94-241](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

Fishery Conservation and Management Act of 1976. Extended the existing 12-mile exclusive U.S. fishing zone off the Nation's coasts to 200 miles. Approved Apr. 13, 1976. ([90 Stat. 331; PL94-265](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

National Science and Technology Policy, Organization, and Priorities Act of 1976. Established an office of Science and Technology Policy in the Executive Office of the President. Authorized the President to appoint a director of the office and up to four associate directors to advise the President on scientific matters affecting defense and the budget, areas beyond the normal reach of the head of the National Science Foundation. Approved May 11, 1976. ([90 Stat. 459; PL94-282](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

Federal Election Campaign Act Amendments of 1976. Reconstituted the Federal Election Commission as a six-member panel appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate. Changed the enforcement procedures, modified the Commission's authority to render advisory opinions, amended various contribution limitations, and made changes in the system for providing U.S. Government funding of Presidential campaigns. Gave Congress the power to disapprove individual sections of any regulation

proposed by the Commission. Approved May 11, 1976. ([90 Stat. 475; PL94-283](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

Indochina Migration and Refugee Act of 1975 Amendment. Laos Refugees, Inclusion. Amended the Indochina Migration and Refugee Act of 1975 to provide for the inclusion of refugees from Laos. Approved June 21, 1976. ([90 Stat. 691; PL94-313](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

International Security Assistance and Arms Export Control Act of 1976. Authorized congressional oversight of commercial sales of major U.S. military weapons and equipment abroad and extended the 1974 veto provisions to sales by the Government of major defense equipment costing at least \$7 million. Prohibited private companies from selling any major equipment costing \$25 million or more directly to other governments. Approved June 30, 1976. ([90 Stat. 729; PL94-329](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

Coastal Zone Management Act Amendments of 1976. Amended the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 to authorize a \$1.2 billion program of Federal aid to coastal cities, to assist them in dealing with the effects of offshore gas and oil development. Consisted of \$800 million in loan and bond guarantee authority to be used over a 10-year period and \$400 million authorized for direct grants to coastal States, for use over an eight-year period ending in fiscal 1984. Approved July 26, 1976. ([90 Stat. 1013; PL94-370](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

Federal Coal Leasing Amendment Act of 1975. Amended the Mineral Leasing Act of 1920, requiring an additional 12.5 percent of all moneys received from sales, bonuses, royalties, and rentals of public lands under the provisions of the Act and the Geothermal Steam Act of 1970 to be paid by the Secretary of the Treasury to the State within the boundaries of which the leased lands or deposits are or were located. This money was to be used as each State legislature directs. Also provided that certain funds received from the Department of the Interior oil shale test leases could be used by the States of Utah and Colorado as their legislatures directed, giving priority to those subdivisions socially or economically impacted by the development of minerals leased under the Act. Approved Aug. 4, 1976. ([90 Stat. 1083; PL94-377](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

Energy Conservation and Production Act. Established energy conservation standards for new buildings, a low-income family weatherization program, a loan guarantee program for commercial and industrial buildings, and a financial incentive experimentation program for existing residential buildings. Approved Aug. 14, 1976. ([90 Stat. 1125; PL94-385](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

Government in the Sunshine Act. Opened the meetings of collegial or multi-member Government agencies to public scrutiny "where such deliberations determine or result in the joint conduct or disposition of official agency business." Permissive exemptions within the statute allowed meetings to be closed for certain specific reasons. Provided procedures for court redress to open a meeting were provided and provisions for regulating

ex parte communications in any on-the-record agency proceeding. Approved Sept. 13, 1976. ([90 Stat. 1241; PL94-409](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

Hart-Scott-Rodino Antitrust Improvements Act of 1976. Amended and updated the nation's antitrust laws, providing that private sector organizations must notify the Federal Trade Commission and Department of Justice before completing certain mergers, acquisitions or transfers of securities or other assets, and certifying that said mergers or other moves would not adversely impact U.S. commerce under the antitrust statutes. Approved Sept. 30, 1976. ([90 Stat. 1383; PL94-435](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

Emergency Jobs Program Extension Act of 1976. Extended the emergency public service jobs program under Title VI of the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act doubling its size if sufficient funds were available. Approved Oct. 1, 1976. ([90 Stat. 1476; PL94-444](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

Tax Reform Act of 1976. Changed the laws concerning tax shelter investments, minimum and maximum taxes, extension of individual income tax reductions, alimony deductions, retirement income credits, child care expense credit, sick pay exclusion, moving expenses, business use of homes and vacation homes, foreign tax preferences, trusts, capital formation, estate and gift taxes, capital gains and losses, domestic international sales, tax-exempt organizations, corporate tax rates and surcharge exemptions, certain railroad and airline provisions, and international trade agreements. Repealed and revised obsolete tax provisions from the U.S. Tax Code. Approved Oct. 4, 1976. ([90 Stat. 1520; PL94-455](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

Toxic Substances Control Act. Provided for an assessment of the potential toxicity of substances before production and dissemination. Emphasis being placed on the prevention of adverse effects before they occur, rather than correction of hazardous situations after they became manifest. Also included a provision banning the use of Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCBs) within two and one-half years. Approved Oct. 11, 1976. ([90 Stat. 2003; PL94-469](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

Education Amendments of 1976. Extended and overhauled most federally funded aid to higher and vocational education programs. Made no revolutionary changes in the programs, but did revise the direction of some and consolidated most vocational education categorical grants into a single block grant. Also extended vocational education programs, and the college work-study and cooperative education programs through fiscal 1982. Most of the remaining higher education programs were extended through fiscal 1979. Approved Oct. 12, 1976. ([90 Stat. 2081; PL94-482](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

State and Local Fiscal Assistance Amendments of 1976. Provided for a \$25.6 billion extension of the Federal revenue sharing program through fiscal 1980. The three-year, nine-month extension (from January 1, 1977, through September 30, 1980) put the program on the fiscal year basis followed by the Federal Government (October-September). Gave the 96th

Congress, due to convene in 1979, responsibility for deciding whether the revenue sharing experiment should continue. Approved Oct. 13, 1976. ([90 Stat. 2341; PL94-488](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

Copyright Law Revision Act of 1976. Provided for a general revision of the copyright law, title 17 of the United States Code. Took into consideration such technological innovations as photocopying, radio and television, motion pictures, and phonograph. Raised royalties paid to song-writers by record-makers and extended new protections to periodical and book writers. Imposed copyright liability for the first time upon three industries that were heavy users of copyrighted materials: public broadcasters, cable television systems, and jukebox operators. Brought U.S. laws into conformity with international law, extending the duration of copyright protection to the lifetime of the author plus 50 years. Repealed a long-standing statute denying copyright protection to most foreign-manufactured works. Approved Oct. 19, 1976. ([90 Stat. 2541; PL94-553](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

Payment in Lieu of Taxes Act. Provided for annual Federal payments to local governments to compensate for tax revenues lost because of tax exempt Federal lands within their boundaries. Approved Oct. 20, 1976. ([90 Stat. 2662; PL94-565](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976. Updated and consolidated some 3,000 public land laws into a single statute defining the Bureau of Land Management's authority. Required the Secretary of Interior to develop comprehensive land-use plans for the BLM lands and to maintain an up-to-date inventory of the lands and their resources. Approved Oct. 21, 1976. ([90 Stat. 2743; PL94-579](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976. Authorized a total of \$365.9 million for solid waste programs, mostly in fiscal 1978-79, including \$80 million for general use by the Environmental Protection Agency, \$70 million to finance State solid waste management programs, \$50 million for hazardous waste programs, and \$35 million to help finance demonstration projects or new methods of recycling, extracting resources from or disposing of solid wastes. Established a Federal permit program to regulate hazardous wastes and required States receiving Federal grants to ban all open dumping within five years of enactment. Approved Oct. 21, 1976. ([90 Stat. 2795; PL94-580](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

Water Resources Development Act of 1976. Authorized the planning and design of 36 water resources projects and construction of 14 others. In addition authorized flood control, navigation and dam projects in 36 States and 2 territories, and modifications in previously authorized projects and new studies, as well as changes in administrative policy. Approved Oct. 22, 1976. ([90 Stat. 2917; PL94-587](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

National Forest Management Act of 1976. Gave congressional sanction to the practice of clear-cutting in national forests under Federal guidelines and revised Federal forest management policy. Authorized a \$200 million annual

appropriation for reforestation efforts beginning in fiscal 1978. Approved Oct. 22, 1976. ([90 Stat. 2949; PL94-588](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

B-1 Strategic Bomber Program Authorization. Provided as part of the **Department of Defense Appropriation Act, 1977** that the funds appropriated for procurement of the Air Force's B-1 Bomber could not be expended at a rate exceeding \$87 million a month through January 1977. Approved Sept. 22, 1976. ([90 Stat. 1279; PL94-419](#)) ([Regulatory History](#))

Source:

Dell, Christopher and Stephen W. Stathis. [Major Acts of Congress and Treaties Approved by the Senate, 1789-1980](#). Government Division (CRS), Sept. 1, 1982. 97th Congress, 2nd Session, 82-156 GOV. ProQuest Congressional, CRS-1982-GOV-0005

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