

Urban Development, and the Environmental Protection Agency.

The Council's purpose will be to ensure that Federal programs do not contribute to environmental degradation in the Lake Tahoe Basin. The Council will develop and issue environmental quality thresholds and carrying capacity standards for the air, water, and land resources in the region. Until these standards are adopted, the Council will recommend that proposed Federal actions having significant adverse environmental effects on the Lake Tahoe region not be approved. The Executive order also directs Federal agencies to review their programs and other actions which may affect the Lake Tahoe area and to defer action if such programs would significantly stimulate additional development in environmentally critical areas or would promote pollution from increases in auto traffic.

I am pleased that this Council already is being organized, has begun its assigned tasks, and is working in close consultation with the States, local agencies, and the public.

I am also pleased to see that California and Nevada have recently reached agreement on a revised Bi-State Tahoe Regional Planning Compact. An amended compact has been approved by both States and is now being presented to the Congress for ratification. I congratulate the Governors and legislatures of both States on this achievement. As I noted last May, it is our intention to help make this compact an effective planning instrument for Lake Tahoe. The Federal Council established today will work together with the compact agency to achieve this goal.

I am greatly encouraged by the initiatives taken thus far by the States and by the Congress as well. Pending legislation to provide for acquisition of environmen-

tally sensitive lands at Lake Tahoe is now before the Congress. This legislation will complement the administration actions we are taking now, and it has my full support. I applaud the efforts of Congressmen Santini, Burton, and Fazio in gaining House approval of this bill, and I am hopeful that we will see this measure passed by the full Congress soon. I want to express my appreciation to all who have supported the Santini-Burton legislation, the amendment of the Tahoe Regional Planning Compact, and the establishment of the Federal Coordinating Council.

But the signing of an Executive order on the passage of a law is not a guarantee that we will protect the lake. All Americans have a stake in what we do to affect the quality of this priceless heritage. We all must be careful that the environmental stresses placed on this unique area are not exceeded. Our actions today will determine whether Lake Tahoe—a national treasure—will remain protected for future generations.

Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals Reorganization Act of 1980

*Statement on Signing H.R. 7665 Into Law.
October 15, 1980*

I am pleased to sign into law H.R. 7665, the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals Reorganization Act of 1980. This legislation splits the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals, our largest Federal appellate court, into two new circuits: the Fifth Circuit, composed of the Canal Zone, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas, and the Eleventh Circuit, composed of Alabama, Florida, and Georgia. There is a limit to the num-

ber of judgeships an appellate court can accommodate and still function effectively.

Some time ago it became clear that if the rapid growth in the caseload of the Fifth Circuit continued, necessitating the addition of more and more judges, an unwieldy bench would result. When the size of this court reached 26 active judges, the practical problems of having all the judges take part in a single case became unmanageable. At the same time, it became increasingly difficult to preserve consistency and predictability among the decisions of three-judge panels. The active judges of the circuit early this year unanimously petitioned the Congress requesting that the circuit be split into 2 autonomous circuits to enhance the court's ability to deliver consistent, fair, and expeditious justice.

I cannot sign this bill without noting the impact the old Fifth Circuit has had on this Nation. The Fifth Circuit has a distinguished history of judicial responsibility. This court played a key role in the long-neglected reapportionment of congressional and legislative districts, and in ending the county unit system that had denied urban Georgians equal participation in the political process.

During the dramatic and often difficult years of the 1950's and 1960's, the Fifth Circuit was charged with the actual dismantling of the system of segregation that had stood since the Civil War. In negotiating the thorny pathway that led to end of legal racial discrimination in schools, public accommodations, and other areas, many of the judges of the circuit endured personal condemnation and threats to their lives and to their families. As our Nation declared its intent to end all forms of legal discrimination based on race and color the Fifth Circuit bore the

heavy burden of applying the principles laid down by the Supreme Court in a long series of landmark cases that changed the face of the Deep South.

Under the leadership of Chief Judges Richard Rives, Elbert Tuttle, and John Brown, to name just three of the chief judges known to every constitutional lawyer or student of that era, the Fifth Circuit played a crucial role in a critical period in the life of our region, holding us to the highest principles of justice on which our Nation was founded and supervising their practical application.

The enactment of this legislation represents the work and cooperation of many individuals, especially the judges of the present Fifth Circuit and the senatorial and congressional delegations from the six affected States. I commend the Congress for having acted so promptly in response to the needs of our Federal courts.

NOTE: As enacted, H.R. 7665 is Public Law 96-452, approved October 14.

Maritime Training and Appropriation Authorization Bills

Statement on Signing H.R. 5451 and H.R. 6554 Into Law. October 15, 1980

I am pleased today to sign two bills to provide continuing support for the United States-flag merchant marine: H.R. 5451, the Maritime Education and Training Act of 1980, the most comprehensive reform ever of our maritime training and education laws, and H.R. 6554, the Maritime Appropriation Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1981.

The United States has led the world in developing technologically superior