

OCTOBER 19, 1976

Office of the White House Press Secretary

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NOTICE TO THE PRESS

The President has signed S. 3063--Ozark-Jeta Taylor Lock Dam, Arkansas. This bill renames the Ozark Lock and Dam on the Arkansas River, Arkansas, as the "Ozark-Jeta Taylor Lock and Dam."

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The President has signed S. 2533--R. E. "Bob" Woodruff Lake, Alabama. This bill designates the lake formed by the Jones Bluff Lock and Dam on the Alabama River as the "R. E. 'Bob' Woodruff Lake."

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The President has signed S. 3621--Amendment to the International Claims Settlement Act of 1949. This bill authorizes the determination of claims of United States nationals against the German Democratic Republic.

Upon the establishment of diplomatic relations between the United States and the German Democratic Republic in 1974, it was agreed that the two governments would enter into negotiations for the settlement of U. S. property claims. The Foreign Claims Settlement Commission (the Commission) estimates that approximately 6,000 Americans have been waiting 30 years for compensation for property losses in East Germany.

S. 3621 will authorize the Commission to determine the validity and amount of claims against the German Democratic Republic which derive from the expropriation, nationalization, or other taking of, or special measures directed against, property owned by nationals of the United States. This determination would be used by the Department of State in negotiating a lump-sum settlement agreement with the Government of the German Democratic Republic.

The bill will allow the Commission four years to complete its work in validating claims and determining amounts of awards.

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The President has signed H. R. 12939--Amendments to Coast Guard Personnel Laws. This bill amends and updates various laws relating to Coast Guard personnel. H. R. 12939 will substitute a new term, "promotion year," for the current term "fiscal year" in numerous sections of law relating to Coast Guard personnel. The new term will be defined as beginning on July 1 of each year and ending on June 30 of the following year.

The bill will delete the provision in current law that officers below the rank of captain who are passed over twice for promotion are no longer eligible for consideration for promotion. H. R. 12939 will repeal an archaic provision of law specifying colors for buoys and would amend the law to reflect the fact that the Coast Guard is now a part of the Department of Transportation rather than of the Treasury Department.

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