

October , 1976

Office of the White House Press Secretary

NOTICE TO THE PRESS

The President has signed S. 2278 - the Civil Rights Attorney's Fees Awards Act of 1976, which gives Federal courts discretion to award attorney's fees to prevailing parties in suits to enforce all civil rights statutes and to prevailing private parties in suits brought by the Government charging a violation of the Internal Revenue Code.

S. 2278 will grant discretionary authority to Federal courts to award reasonable attorneys' fees to prevailing parties, defendants or plaintiffs, except for the United States, in suits to enforce the Federal civil rights acts which Congress has passed since 1866.

The President has signed S. 1026 - Omnibus wilderness designations -- will designate 19 wilderness areas encompassing some 387,571 acres in 13 States and establishes eight wilderness study areas encompassing approximately 587,364 acres in three of these States.

The President has signed S. 3894 - Federal Water Pollution Control Act Amendments.

This bill provides authority for the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to guarantee loans made by the Federal Financing Bank to finance the non-Federal share of the construction costs of municipal sewage treatment works.

S. 3894 will authorize EPA to guarantee loans to municipalities for that part of the cost of construction of sewage treatment facilities not funded by Federal grants.

The bill will require the Administrator of EPA to:

- make a finding that the project meets the requirements of the FWPCA and is eligible for a Federal grant;
- certify that the municipality is unable to obtain sufficient credit on reasonable terms without the guarantee; and,
- make a determination that there is a reasonable assurance that the municipality will repay the Federal loan.

The bill will also require the Secretary of the Treasury to make a determination of what constitutes reasonable terms for municipalities to borrow funds.

The President has signed S. 12 - Judicial Survivors' Annuities Reform Act. This bill increases annuities for survivors of Federal Justices and judges, provides for periodic future increases, and substantially restructures the financing and benefit provisions of the annuity program.

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