

Originally, experts believed the anthrax spores could not escape from sealed envelopes. We now know differently, because of cases where postal workers were exposed even though the envelopes they processed were not open.

Anthrax apparently can be transferred from one letter to another, or from a letter to mail sorting equipment. But anthrax is not contagious, so it does not spread from human to human the way a cold or a flu can. Anthrax can be killed by sterilization, and the Postal Service is purchasing sterilizing equipment to be installed across the country.

More than 30 billion pieces of mail have moved through the Postal Service since September the 11th, so we believe the odds of any one piece of mail being tainted are very low. But still, people should take appropriate precautions: look carefully at your mail before opening it; tell your doctor if you believe you may have been exposed to anthrax. An excellent summary of the symptoms of this disease can be found on the web site of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, www.cdc.gov.

Remember, doctors warn that you can put your health at risk by taking antibiotics when you don't need them, so use antibiotics only after consulting a health care professional. If you see anything suspicious or have useful information, please contact law enforcement authorities. The Postal Service and the FBI have offered a reward of up to \$1 million for information leading to the arrest and the conviction of the anthrax terrorists.

And those who believe this is an opportunity for a prank should know that sending false alarms is a serious criminal offense. At least 20 individuals have already been arrested for anthrax hoaxes, and we will pursue anyone who tries to frighten their fellow Americans in this cruel way.

We do not yet know who sent the anthrax, whether it was the same terrorists who committed the attacks on September the 11th or whether it was the—other international or domestic terrorists. We do know that anyone who would try to infect other people with anthrax is guilty of an act of terror. We will solve these crimes, and we will punish those responsible. As we learn more about

these anthrax attacks, the Government will share the confirmed and credible information we have with you. I'm proud of our citizens' calm and reasoned response to this ongoing terrorist attack.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 1:07 p.m. on November 2 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on November 3. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 2 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of the address.

Statement on Signing the Department of the Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2002

November 5, 2001

Today I have signed into law H.R. 2217, the "Department of the Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2002."

I appreciate the bipartisan effort that has gone into producing this Act. The bill abides by the agreed upon aggregate funding level for Fiscal Year 2002 of \$686 billion and supports several of my Administration's key initiatives with:

- funding from the Land and Water Conservation Fund to acquire and conserve lands in national parks, forests, refuges, and public lands, and assist States in promoting conservation and outdoor recreation;
- funding to reduce the National Park Service deferred maintenance backlog and meet the growing demands on park facilities and resources;
- funding for Indian school construction to keep us on the 5-year path to eliminate the current school repair and maintenance backlog by 2006; and
- full funding for key energy programs, such as the Clean Coal Power initiative, to work in partnership with industry to direct research towards reducing the environmental impact of coal used for power generation in the United States.

I am disappointed that my initiative to increase the Low-Income Weatherization Assistance Program by \$120 million was reduced by \$43 million in the final version of this bill. This reduction will deny program benefits for over 17,000 low-income families, compared with my request.

Several provisions in the bill purport to require congressional approval before executive branch execution of aspects of the bill. I will interpret such provisions to require notification only, since any other interpretation would contradict the Supreme Court ruling in *INS v. Chadha*.

George W. Bush

The White House,
November 5, 2001.

NOTE: H.R. 2217, approved November 5, was assigned Public Law No. 107-63.

Statement on Signing the Military Construction Appropriations Act, 2002

November 5, 2001

Today I have signed into law H.R. 2904, the "Military Construction Appropriations Act, 2002," which provides \$10.5 billion for military construction and family housing programs administered by the Department of Defense.

I appreciate the bipartisan effort that has gone into producing this Act. The Act abides by the agreed upon aggregate funding level for Fiscal Year 2002 of \$686 billion and funds the vast majority of my request for military construction projects, the military housing program, and other projects for our military personnel and their families. The requested projects are critical to supporting military readiness and the quality of life for our soldiers. My Administration showed its commitment to improving the quality of housing available to our military personnel and their families by including an additional \$400 million in the FY 2002 Budget. I want to thank the Congress for including it in this bill. However, I am disappointed that the bill includes a 1.127 percent general reduction, and a rescission of \$55 million from the Ballistic Missile Defense Organization.

As America battles terrorism, we must ensure that our men and women in uniform live in, train at, and deploy from adequate facilities. This bill shows our commitment to our service members by constructing and upgrading military installations, and military family housing in the United States and overseas.

My Administration appreciates that the Congress has worked expeditiously during this difficult and trying time in our Nation's history to consider the FY 2002 appropriations bills. Now, through a renewed sense of bipartisanship, the Congress and my Administration must work together to ensure the timely enactment of the remaining bills.

George W. Bush

The White House,
November 5, 2001.

NOTE: H.R. 2904, approved November 5, was assigned Public Law No. 107-64.

Proclamation 7493—National Adoption Month, 2001

November 5, 2001

*By the President of the United States
of America*

A Proclamation

Children deserve to be raised in loving families with parents who protect and nurture them. For some children, adoption is their best chance for a healthy and happy life. Each year, American families adopt approximately 120,000 newborn or older children, providing them with a loving and supportive environment.

Despite this substantial number of annual adoptions, more than 134,000 children are currently waiting adoption. While our foster care system can provide a safe, temporary home for these children, adoption would give them the love and stability of a permanent family that would better enable them to develop to their full potential.

My Administration is working to help states promote and support adoptions. This year, 35 states and the District of Columbia received adoption incentive awards for increasing the number of children they placed