

In the case of Iraq, it's a lot more complicated than just the passage of four laws, even though I would hope they would get the four laws passed. But again, I repeat the threshold question, does it matter; does it matter to our security here at home? And the answer is, absolutely, it does. It does. And then the second question really for a lot of Americans is, can we succeed? And, in my mind, the answer to that is, absolutely; not only we must succeed, we can succeed.

Listen, thank you all for your time. I appreciate it.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 10:33 a.m. in the James S. Brady Press Briefing Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Secretary of Transportation Mary E. Peters; Gen. David H. Petraeus, USA, commanding general, Multi-National Force—Iraq; U.S. Ambassador to Iraq Ryan C. Crocker; Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki of Iraq; President Mahmud Ahmadi-nejad of Iran; and I. Lewis Libby, former Chief of Staff to the Vice President. He also referred to H.R. 2272, the America COMPETES Act. A reporter referred to Republican Presidential candidate Mitt Romney.

Statement on Signing the America COMPETES Act

August 9, 2007

Today I signed into law H.R. 2272, the "America Creating Opportunities to Meaningfully Promote Excellence in Technology, Education, and Science Act." This legislation shares many of the goals of my American Competitiveness Initiative (ACI). ACI is one of my most important domestic priorities because it provides a comprehensive strategy to help keep America the most innovative nation in the world by strengthening our scientific education and research, improving our technological enterprise, and providing 21st century job training.

Since I announced ACI in January 2006, Congress has risen to the competitiveness challenge in a bipartisan way. House and Senate appropriators started the funding for ACI basic research programs in fiscal year 2007, and so far in this year's appropriations process, they are fully funding my fiscal year 2008 budget request for the National Science Foundation, the Office of Science in the De-

partment of Energy, and the National Institute of Standards and Technology at the Department of Commerce.

This bipartisan spirit of cooperation continues with the legislation I signed. This legislation supports our efforts to double funding for basic research in the physical sciences. And the bill authorizes most of the education programs I called for in ACI, including the Math Now proposal that improves instruction in mathematics and the Advanced Placement program that increases the number of teachers and students participating in AP and International Baccalaureate classes.

I am, however, disappointed that Congress failed to authorize my Adjunct Teacher Corps program to encourage math and science professionals to teach in our schools. I am also disappointed that the legislation includes excessive authorizations and expansion of Government. In total, the bill creates over 30 new programs that are mostly duplicative or counterproductive—including a new Department of Energy agency to fund late-stage technology development more appropriately left to the private sector—and also provides excessive authorizations for existing programs. These new programs, additional requirements and reports, and excessive authorizations will divert resources and focus from priority activities aimed at strengthening the basic research that has given our Nation such a competitive advantage in the world economy. Accordingly, I will request funding in my 2009 budget for those authorizations that support the focused priorities of the ACI, but will not propose excessive or duplicative funding based on authorizations in this bill.

While this legislation includes many unnecessary and misguided programs, in many important ways it heeds my call to action of nearly 2 years ago to take steps to ensure the ongoing competitiveness of our Nation. Congress, however, still has more work to do to improve our Nation's competitiveness. In addition to giving priority to full ACI funding in this year's appropriations bills, I call on Congress to complete work on the remaining components of ACI, including modernizing and making permanent the research and development tax credit, authorizing the

Adjunct Teacher Corps program, and increasing our ability to attract and retain the best and brightest high-skilled workers from around the world.

I thank members of both parties in Congress who worked on this legislation, and I appreciate the willingness of members to remove or otherwise address several of the administration's serious concerns associated with this legislation. I will continue to work with the Congress to ensure that we keep America competitive through appropriate and strong support for science and technology.

NOTE: H.R. 2272, approved August 9, was assigned Public Law No. 110-69.

Memorandum on Reimbursement for Former President Gerald R. Ford Funeral Expenses

August 9, 2007

Memorandum for the Director of the Office of Management and Budget

Subject: Reimbursement for Former President Gerald R. Ford Funeral Expenses

Pursuant to the authority vested in me as the President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States including Public Law 110-5, the Revised Continuing Appropriations Resolution, 2007, I hereby authorize the expenditure from the appropriation, "Unanticipated Needs:"

To	Amount
Gerald R. Ford Foundation,	\$230,600.08
Executive Office of the President White House Office account,	\$24,808.00

To defray expenses incurred as a result of the funeral services for former President Gerald R. Ford.

I hereby determine that this expenditure is necessary to meet unanticipated needs in furtherance of the national interest.

GEORGE W. BUSH

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting the District of Columbia's Fiscal Year 2008 Budget Request

August 9, 2007

Dear Madam Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Pursuant to my constitutional authority and as contemplated by section 446 of The District of Columbia Self-Governmental Reorganization Act as amended in 1989, I am transmitting the District of Columbia's 2008 Budget Request Act. This transmittal does not represent an endorsement of the contents of the D.C. government's requests.

The proposed 2008 Budget Request Act reflects the major programmatic objectives of the Mayor and the Council of the District of Columbia. For 2008, the District estimates total revenues and expenditures of \$8.38 billion.

Sincerely,

George W. Bush

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Nancy Pelosi, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Richard B. Cheney, President of the Senate.

Statement on Improving Border Security and Immigration Within Existing Law

August 10, 2007

Today members of my Cabinet announced a series of important new administrative actions to address border security and immigration challenges. These reforms represent steps my administration can take within the boundaries of existing law to better secure our borders, improve worksite enforcement, streamline existing temporary-worker programs, and help new immigrants assimilate into American society.

Although the Congress has not addressed our broken immigration system by passing comprehensive reform legislation, my administration will continue to take every possible step to build upon the progress already made in strengthening our borders, enforcing our worksite laws, keeping our economy well-