velopment, Interior, Justice, Labor, State, and Veterans Affairs; the Environmental Protection Agency; the National Aeronautics and Space Administration; the Small Business Administration; and many smaller agencies.

Most importantly, H.R. 1643 enables Federal workers to return to the job and to be paid—both the 480,000 who have been working without pay and the 280,000 furloughed workers.

The bill also funds a limited number of Federal functions for the rest of fiscal 1996. They include nutrition services for the elderly; grants to States for child welfare services; Federal Parent Locator Service activities; State unemployment insurance administration activities; general welfare assistance payments and foster care payments to Indians; the Federal subsidy to the rail industry pension and certain other expenses of the Railroad Retirement Board; visitor services of the National Park System, National Wildlife Refuges, National Forests, Smithsonian Institution, National Gallery of Art, John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, and United States Holocaust Memorial; and State Department visa, passport, and U.S. citizen services. In addition, family support payments to States and payments to States for foster care and adoption assistance are provided through March 15, 1996.

The bill ensures, through September 30, 1996, benefit payments to about 3.3 million veterans and their survivors. It also provides for payments to contractors of the Veterans Health Administration for services related to the health and safety of patients in Veterans Affairs medical facilities.

The measure provides authority for the District of Columbia to continue full operations, using District funds, through September 30, thereby extending the authority provided by the Fifth Continuing Resolution for fiscal 1996, which expires January 25. Regrettably, the measure contains an objectionable provision that would single out poor women by prohibiting the use of District funds for providing abortion services. I oppose including this provision in the regular fiscal 1996 District of Columbia appropriations bill, and I urge the Congress to send that bill to me—in a form I can sign—as soon as possible.

The measure also provides for reimbursement to States for State funds used to implement Federal programs and to pay furloughed State employees whose compensation is advanced or reimbursed, in whole or in part, by the Federal Government during any 1996 lapse in appropriations and it makes interest payable on the State funds that were used.

The problem with this bill is in what it does *not* do. It does not end the inconvenience, if not suffering, that millions of Americans continue to experience because of the partial government shutdown. It does not provide funds to help put 100,000 more police officers on the streets of U.S. cities; funds for Head Start; funds for the States for social services and job training; funds to help U.S. businesses with export financing; and funds to continue the Space Station program and other key initiatives at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration. Nor does the bill provide needed funds for contracts vital to protecting the environment.

Along with denying services, the shutdown is threatening the vitality of thousands of businesses, many of them with contracts with the Federal Government. Also at risk are the jobs of thousands of workers in those businesses. The longer the shutdown continues, the more its effects will be felt.

Clearly, this bill is only a partial solution to the partial shutdown. The real solution, and the one that the Congress should pursue without delay, is to send me acceptable 1996 appropriations bills for the agencies in question or, at a minimum, an acceptable continuing resolution that will permit the Government to perform the full range of services that citizens expect.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
January 6, 1996.

NOTE: H.R. 1643, approved January 6, was assigned Public Law No. 104–92.