

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

JOINT STATEMENT ON RESCISSIONS BILL

WASHINGTON, D.C. (June 6, 1995) -- After sending the \$16.4 billion FY95 rescissions bill to the White House today, Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole and House Speaker Newt Gingrich urged President Clinton to abandon his veto plans for the package. They issued the following statement:

"Mr. President, signing the \$16.4 billion FY95 rescissions bill -- \$9 billion of which is in real savings -- would send a strong message that you are serious about cutting federal spending, reducing the size of the deficit, and balancing the budget, three goals recognized as both achievable and desirable by the American people. By threatening to veto this measure, which includes funding to the Federal Emergency Management Agency for disaster relief, Oklahoma for reconstruction, and Jordan to complete the peace initiative, you are failing those most in need.

For four and a half months, the House and Senate worked in bipartisan cooperation to craft a measure that meets three important goals: funds vital national interests, downsizes the federal bureaucracy, and offsets all supplemental appropriations with spending cuts. Your veto flies in the face of this effort put forth on behalf of our children and grandchildren, already burdened by an escalating national debt.

On the few occasions your Administration chose to engage in the debate, we met you more than halfway. You asked for Jordan debt relief; we met, and exceeded, your request. You asked for FEMA funds for disaster relief in 40 states; we met your request. You threatened a veto if striker-replacement language was included in the bill; we took it out. You voiced concern about the amount of cuts to your investment initiatives; we compromised and took lesser reductions in Americorps. We also left AIDS funding, breast cancer screening, childhood immunization, Head Start and other programs untouched. Yet, after we had done our part, you dropped the ball, instead opting to make a political statement. Congress was notified of your decision in the morning papers. You screamed pork, yet failed to mention the \$9 billion in savings included in the bill.

We are almost three-quarters into the fiscal year and time is running out for achieving true savings. It is wrong to play politics with such important legislation. You have stated publicly that you are ready and willing to work with Congress. This bill starts the process. It enjoys bipartisan support on Capitol Hill and broad support from the American public.

We look forward to hearing your decision. We hope, for the sake of generations to come, that you will take this first step to getting the federal government's financial house in order."