

the help of the folks at Jericho. They shared with me their love for their little girls, and I know the feeling. And I appreciate the fact that, you know, that you're on your feet and you're feeling good and strong and you're assuming the responsibility of fatherhood.

And so I've come to herald programs such as the Jericho Program. Our Government should not fear the influence of faith in our society. We ought to welcome faith-based programs. Last night I called on the Government to make the charitable choice provisions of our law permanent. We shouldn't say to programs such as this, we'll help you through a Department of Labor and Justice grant, and then turn our back on the program when it's successful. There ought to be consistency of policy. Our Government ought to welcome results. We ought to say, thank God there are people such as this in our neighborhoods and societies helping these good men.

So it's an honor to be here. I'm proud to be in the presence of Americans who care deeply about our country and are willing to do something about the future of the country by helping lost souls find love and hope in their lives. And I want to thank the—I want to thank very much the Episcopal Community Services for sponsoring this program.

Again, I want to thank you all for leading with your hearts. Thank these two good men for joining me today. God bless you. Proud to be with you. Thank you.

All right. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:45 a.m. at the Robert M. Davis House. In his remarks, he referred to Bonnie Ariano, director, and Greg Carpenter, coordinator for mentoring and training, Jericho Program.

Remarks on Signing the Executive Order on Protecting American Taxpayers From Government Spending on Wasteful Earmarks *January 29, 2008*

Director Nussle, thank you. Before I sign the Executive order on earmarks, I do want to congratulate the House of Representatives for overwhelmingly passing a economic growth package that will help our economy. The temptation is going to be for the Senate

to load it up. My concerns is that we need to get this bill out of the Senate and on my desk so the checks can get in the hands of our consumers and our businesses can be assured of the incentives necessary to make investments.

Anyway, I do want to thank the Speaker and Leader Boehner for working quickly and working in a bipartisan fashion. This is a very good start.

And now I'm going to sign this Executive order. Last night I said that it's very important for Congress to earn the trust of the American taxpayer, and one way they should do so is to end the practice of earmarks. Now, I said last year that they should voluntarily cut the number in half—not only the number but the amount of earmarks in half. They chose not to do so. So last night I told the Congress that I would veto any bill, appropriations bill, that does not cut the number and the amount of earmarks in half.

Secondly, there's a practice here in Washington—and I'm not sure many of our citizens understand it takes place—where Members just put in special spending projects into what's called report language. That means that these projects never were voted on, never really saw the light of day. And this Executive order says that any such earmarks this year and into the future will be ignored by this administration and, hopefully, future administrations, unless those spending projects were voted on by the Congress.

The American people expect there to be transparency in the process. They expect the people to be—here in Washington to be wise about how they spend their money. And this Executive order will go a long way toward sending that signal to the Congress and, at the same time, earning the trust of the American people.

So, Mr. Director, thank you for your leadership on the issue. It was the right course of action to take, and I am proud to have signed the Executive order. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:38 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Office of Management and Budget Director James A. Nussle. He also referred to Executive Order 13457.

Executive Order 13457—Protecting American Taxpayers From Government Spending on Wasteful Earmarks

January 29, 2008

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, it is hereby ordered as follows:

Section 1. Policy. It is the policy of the Federal Government to be judicious in the expenditure of taxpayer dollars. To ensure the proper use of taxpayer funds that are appropriated for Government programs and purposes, it is necessary that the number and cost of earmarks be reduced, that their origin and purposes be transparent, and that they be included in the text of the bills voted upon by the Congress and presented to the President. For appropriations laws and other legislation enacted after the date of this order, executive agencies should not commit, obligate, or expend funds on the basis of earmarks included in any non-statutory source, including requests in reports of committees of the Congress or other congressional documents, or communications from or on behalf of Members of Congress, or any other non-statutory source, except when required by law or when an agency has itself determined a project, program, activity, grant, or other transaction to have merit under statutory criteria or other merit-based decisionmaking.

Sec. 2. Duties of Agency Heads. (a) With respect to all appropriations laws and other legislation enacted after the date of this order, the head of each agency shall take all necessary steps to ensure that:

- (i) agency decisions to commit, obligate, or expend funds for any earmark are based on the text of laws, and in particular, are not based on language in any report of a committee of Congress, joint explanatory statement of a committee of conference of the Congress, statement of managers concerning a bill in the Congress, or any other non-statutory statement or indication of views of the Congress, or a House, committee, Member, officer, or staff thereof;

- (ii) agency decisions to commit, obligate, or expend funds for any earmark are based on authorized, transparent, statutory criteria and merit-based decision making, in the manner set forth in section II of OMB Memorandum M-07-10, dated February 15, 2007, to the extent consistent with applicable law; and
- (iii) no oral or written communications concerning earmarks shall supersede statutory criteria, competitive awards, or merit-based decisionmaking.

(b) An agency shall not consider the views of a House, committee, Member, officer, or staff of the Congress with respect to commitments, obligations, or expenditures to carry out any earmark unless such views are in writing, to facilitate consideration in accordance with section 2(a)(ii) above. All written communications from the Congress, or a House, committee, Member, officer, or staff thereof, recommending that funds be committed, obligated, or expended on any earmark shall be made publicly available on the Internet by the receiving agency, not later than 30 days after receipt of such communication, unless otherwise specifically directed by the head of the agency, without delegation, after consultation with the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, to preserve appropriate confidentiality between the executive and legislative branches.

(c) Heads of agencies shall otherwise implement within their respective agencies the policy set forth in section 1 of this order, consistent with such instructions as the Director of the Office of Management and Budget may prescribe.

(d) The head of each agency shall upon request provide to the Director of the Office of Management and Budget information about earmarks and compliance with this order.

Sec. 3. Definitions. For purposes of this order:

(a) The term “agency” means an executive agency as defined in section 105 of title 5, United States Code, and the United States Postal Service and the Postal Regulatory Commission, but shall exclude the Government Accountability Office; and