

The National Science Board consists of the Director of the National Science Foundation, ex-officio, and 24 members appointed by the President. The Chairman and the Vice Chairman are selected by the Board.

Citizenship Day and Constitution Week, 1976

Proclamation 4460. September 13, 1976

*By the President of the United States of America
a Proclamation*

With the signing of the United States Constitution on September 17, 1787, the founding fathers approved for the people of this Nation an effective plan of self-government, which has, with its subsequent amendments—including the Bill of Rights—preserved the principles of the Declaration of Independence. It is the responsibility of the citizens of the United States to uphold, support and defend those ideals.

An understanding and appreciation of the events and hardships which produced that great document is indispensable to a rededication to the preservation of its ideals.

To that end, the Congress, by a joint resolution of February 29, 1952 (36 U.S.C. 153), designated September 17 as Citizenship Day, in commemoration of the formation and signing of the Constitution of the United States on September 17, 1787, and authorized the President to issue annually a proclamation calling upon officials of the Government to display the flag on all Government buildings on that day. By a joint resolution of August 2, 1956 (36 U.S.C. 159), Congress authorized the President to designate the period beginning September 17 and ending September 23 of each year as Constitution Week and to issue a proclamation calling for the observance of that week.

The commemoration during the year 1976 assumes special significance, because it also marks the Bicentennial anniversary of the founding on July 4, 1776, of our country as an independent Nation. This is a time for reflection upon our history and upon our future, and a time for commitment to the goals that have made America great.

Now, THEREFORE, I, GERALD R. FORD, President of the United States of America, call upon appropriate Government officials to display the flag of the United States on all Government buildings on Citizenship Day, September 17, 1976. I urge Federal, State and local officials, as well as leaders of all religious, civic, educational and other organizations, to conduct meaningful ceremonies and observances on that day to commemorate the formation and signing of the Constitution and to extend recognition to those persons who during the year acquired the status of citizenship, either by coming of age or by naturalization.

I also designate the period beginning September 17 and ending September 23, 1976, as Constitution Week, and I urge the people of the United States to observe that week with appropriate ceremonies and activities in their schools and churches and in other suitable places, to the end that our citizens may have a better understanding of the Constitution and of the rights and responsibilities of United States citizenship.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this thirteenth day of September, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and seventy-six, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and first.

GERALD R. FORD

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 12:49 p.m.,
September 13, 1976]

Government in the Sunshine Act

*The President's Remarks Upon Signing S. 5 Into Law.
September 13, 1976*

*Distinguished Members of the House and the Senate,
members of the administration and guests:*

It is my great privilege and honor this morning to sign into law S. 5, the Government in Sunshine Act.

I strongly endorse the concept which underlies this legislation, that the decisionmaking process and the decision-making business of regulatory agencies must be open to the public.

And I congratulate the Members of the Congress in making certain that this legislation comes to the White House and is available for my signature on this occasion.

In a democracy, the public has a right to know not only what the government decides, but why and by what process.

Today, many citizens feel that their government is too remote; that it is not responsive to their needs. This legislation should go a long way in reaffirming that government exists for the people, not apart from the people.

Under this law some 50 regulatory agencies, including the Securities and Exchange Commission, the Civil Service Commission, and the National Science Board, are required to give advance notice of their meetings and then hold these meetings in public. If an agency votes to close a session for one of the specific reasons set forth in the law, verbatim transcripts of most such meetings would be available to the public.

The law also prohibits any communication between agency officials and outside persons having an interest in matters being considered before a regulatory body. Furthermore, the Freedom of Information Act has been amended by narrowing the authority of agencies to withhold information from the public.

The Government in Sunshine Act is in keeping with America's proud heritage that the government serves and the people rule. This afternoon, I am delighted to sign this legislation and to reaffirm that heritage and let the sunshine in.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:07 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House.

As enacted, the Government in the Sunshine Act (S. 5) is Public Law 94-409, approved September 13, 1976.

Government in the Sunshine Act

Statement by the President on Signing S. 5 Into Law. September 13, 1976

I have today signed into law S. 5, known as the "Government in the Sunshine Act". I strongly endorse the concept which underlies this legislation—that most of the decisionmaking business of regulatory agencies can and should be open to the public.

Under this new law, certain agencies, such as the Securities and Exchange Commission, the Civil Service Commission, and the National Science Board—approximately 50 in all—are required to give notice in advance and hold their business meetings open to public observation, unless the agency votes to close a session for a specific reason permitted by the act. Verbatim transcripts would be required to be maintained and made available to the public for many of the closed meetings.

Communications between agency officials and outside persons having an interest in a statutorily required hearing or an adjudication are prohibited. Furthermore, the provision of the Freedom of Information Act which permits an agency to withhold certain information when authorized to do so by statute has been narrowed to authorize such withholding only if the statute specifically prohibits disclosure, or establishes particular criteria for the withholding, or refers to particular types of matters to be withheld. The new act also amends the Federal Advisory Committee Act to permit the closing of such committee meetings for the same reasons meetings may be closed under this act.

I wholeheartedly support the objective of government in the sunshine. I am concerned, however, that in a few instances unnecessarily ambiguous and perhaps harmful provisions were included in S. 5.

The most serious problem concerns the Freedom of Information Act exemption for withholding information specifically exempted from disclosure by another statute. While that exemption may well be more inclusive than necessary, the amendment in this act was the subject of many changes and was adopted without a clear or adequate record of what statutes would be affected and what changes are intended. Under such circumstances, it can

be anticipated that many unintended results will occur including adverse effects on current protections of personal privacy, and further corrective legislation will likely be required.

Moreover, the ambiguous definition of the meetings covered by this act, the unnecessary rigidity of certain of the act's procedures, and the potentially burdensome requirement for the maintenance of transcripts are provisions which may require modification. Implementation of the act should be carefully monitored by the executive branch and the Congress with this in mind.

Despite these concerns, I commend the Congress both for its initiative and the general responsiveness of this legislation to the recommendations of my administration that the "Government in the Sunshine Act" genuinely benefit the American people and their government.

NOTE: As enacted, the Government in the Sunshine Act (S. 5) is Public Law 94-409, approved September 13, 1976.

Amendments to the Packers and Stockyards Act of 1921

The President's Remarks Upon Signing H.R. 8410 Into Law. September 13, 1976

Members of the House and the Senate, members of the livestock industry, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen:

American agriculture, as we all know, built on the free enterprise and open market system, has long been the envy of people all over the world. No other nation has an agricultural industry to match American farmers and ranchers when it comes to providing food at reasonable cost.

In recent years, however, we have seen the need for greater protection of livestock producers. The legislation I am about to sign assures that our livestock producers will receive payments for the livestock they sell to meatpackers, even if a packer should suddenly go out of business.

Last year, cattle producers unfortunately lost millions of dollars when one major meatpacker went bankrupt. This legislation will prevent such losses in the future. These constructive amendments to the Packers and Stockyards Act will reassure producers, provide stability in the marketplace, and help to insure an adequate supply of meat for American consumers.

I am happy to see so many Members of the House and the Senate who were very instrumental in the passage of this legislation. Their bipartisan efforts gave Americans a sensible and a rapid response to a clearly demonstrated need.

Without creating excessive restrictions on any segment of the industry, without creating a superfluous, new government agency, and without significantly modifying our