

# AMERICAN FEDERATION OF THE PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED, Inc.



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Affiliates: AFPH Educational Fund, Inc., AFPH Institute for Human Engineering, Inc.  
(Contributions to affiliates are tax-deductible)

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PAUL A. STRACHAN, President

MISS MILDRED SCOTT, Secretary-Treasurer



July 17, 1954

To all National and International Unions,  
State Federations of Labor, and  
Central Labor Bodies, and  
State Industrial Union Councils, and  
City Industrial Union Councils

Greeting:

The AFPH-LABOR backed amendments to S. 2759, the bill to amend the Vocational Rehabilitation Act, were approved in Conference, this week-end, and will go on Senate and House floors for final approval, early next week. It is believed Congress will accept the Conference Report.

While AFPH and its Labor Associates deeply regret the failure of Congress to enact S. 2570, the FEDERAL AGENCY FOR HANDICAPPED bill, knowing, as we do, that it presented a definite program that, in function, would have gone a long way to meet the varied needs and problems of our 38,000,000 Handicapped, we believe that passage of S. 2759, now, will speed the day when the FEDERAL AGENCY will become a reality, because, the lack of a definite program and plan, in the present bill, which, in substance, simply throws a lot of money into the lap of the Secretary of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, WITHOUT ear-marking it for specific projects, or, coordinating the program as a whole, will soon come back to plague those who claim they want a real program.

But, in fact, ~~AFPH~~, and Labor, can take credit for the following:

1. THERE WOULD HAVE BEEN NO BILL AT ALL, IF AFPH-LABOR HAD NOT DEMANDED, AND GOTTEN HEARINGS, AND PUSHED THE MATTER TO A CONCLUSION. AFPH-LABOR CAN TAKE FULL CREDIT FOR THIS.
2. S. 2759, DESPITE ITS LACKS AND DEFECTS, WILL, IN THREE YEARS, PUSH THE PRESENT APPROPRIATION, \$23,500,000, UP TO \$65,000,000--A GAIN OF APPROXIMATELY \$42,000,000.
3. AN ADVISORY COUNCIL ON HANDICAPPED AFFAIRS WILL AFFORD A MEANS OF PROPER LABOR-MANAGEMENT, HANDICAPPED, AND PROFESSIONAL REPRESENTATIVES, PASSING UPON NEW PROJECTS. (Labor, incidentally, must be on the alert, if and when S. 2759 is finally passed, to see that strong representations are made to Secretary Hobby, and Undersecretary Rockefeller, so that Labor will have proper representation in this Committee, or Council.)
4. GRANTS TO HOME-BOUND HANDICAPPED - AFTER THE 6 MONTHS SURVEY, PROVIDED FOR IN CONFERENCE REPORT, CONGRESS WILL UNDOUBTEDLY APPROVE \$5,000,000 AS INITIAL APPROPRIATION, and \$2,000,000 A YEAR, THEREAFTER, EAR-MARKED FOR THIS SPECIFIC PURPOSE.
5. AMENDMENTS TO THE WAGNER-PEYSER ACT, PROVIDING THAT THE U. S. EMPLOYMENT SERVICE MUST HAVE, THROUGH ITS STATE AFFILIATES, AT LEAST ONE HANDICAPPED PLACEMENT SPECIALIST IN EACH OF THE 1,800-odd OFFICES OF THE EMPLOYMENT



SERVICE, ACROSS COUNTRY, FROM A STANDPOINT OF JOBS FOR HANDICAPPED,  
THIS IS THE GREATEST ADVANCE EVER MADE ON BEHALF OF THE HANDICAPPED.

Summarizing, total benefits in bill and amendments thereto, as approved by Senate-House Conferees, if approved by Congress (which seems very likely), will approximate \$45,000,000 MORE THAN THE PRESENT PROGRAM. That gain is purely the result of AFPH-Labor work.

We are greatly indebted to Democratic Whip, Hon. John W. McCormack, of Massachusetts, for the splendid floor leadership in the House, and to Representatives Harry R. Sheppard, of California, (who sponsored the U. S. Employment Service Amendment), and, to a great Labor supporter, Hon. Augustine B. Kelley, of Pennsylvania, who carried the amendment providing GRANTS FOR HOMEBOUND HANDICAPPED, as well as the increase, from \$75,000 to \$225,000 for the PRESIDENT'S COMMITTEE ON EMPLOYMENT OF HANDICAPPED.

We also owe to Senators Murray, Hill, Sparkman, Lehman and Humphrey, our thanks for their splendid support in the Senate. We shall not forget that Senators H. Alexander Smith, of New Jersey; William A. Purtell, of Connecticut, and Robert W. Upton, of New Hampshire, ignored Labor and the Handicapped, and did all possible to kill our bill, S. 2570, and only accepted amendments to improve that bill, because of Senate and House pressures which we generated. Chairman McConnell, House Education and Labor Committee is entitled to some thanks, but even he failed, signally, to carry the ball for our bill, and we were thus forced to achieve whatever was achieved, without him. In the House Repr. Graham A. Barden ignored Labor and the Handicapped and did all possible to kill our bills.

All in all, Brothers, this has been a great victory for the Handicapped and Labor, and its benefits will aid thousands and thousands of our citizens, who have been denied help that would enable them to achieve status as wage-earners, and tax-payers.

To those of you, in Labor, who gave financial and other support to this program, we offer our sincere thanks, and hope that our work will continue to merit your whole-hearted support. To those who have never contributed to AFPH, I can only say that I hope you will, in the light of this great advance won by our efforts, in future, give unstinted support to this program, as we have always lacked sufficient funds to do the job as it could and should be done.

I hope to hear from all of you, as this is a matter which deeply concerns all Labor, and I am glad to be able to report to you that we are still fighting; still planning for a long-range campaign, early next Session, while, meantime, making every effort - if S. 2759 is approved by Congress - TO SEE TO IT, THAT IT IS ADMINISTERED FAIRLY. THAT JOB, BROTHERS, WILL TAKE A LOT OF DOING, ESPECIALLY IN THE ANTI-LABOR, ANTI-HANDICAPPED ATMOSPHERE WE FIND IN WASHINGTON NOW. Our time, for the next several months, then, will be fully engrossed in working out the administrative end, and we ask that you continue to give your interest and full support to us.

Again thanking you for past support, and with best wishes for an even more successful 1955 program, WITH A CONGRESS THAT IS MORE CONCERNED WITH HUMAN BEINGS, AND LESS, WITH ABSTRACTIONS, I am

Fraternally,

PAUL A. STRACHAN

President