

From: AMERICAN FEDERATION OF THE PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED
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LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM OF THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF
THE PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED INTRODUCED IN CONGRESS

Paul A. Strachan, National President, American Federation of the Physically Handicapped, today stated that the Federation's Legislative Program, including bills to establish a FEDERAL AGENCY FOR HANDICAPPED; TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR CERTAIN HANDICAPPED; AMENDMENT TO INTERSTATE COMMERCE ACT, etc., had been introduced into Congress.

FEDERAL AGENCY FOR HANDICAPPED

President Strachan stated "The Federal Agency for Handicapped bill represents the culmination of more than 40 years of study and practice in the Handicapped field and is the most complete, over-all program ever offered on behalf of all Handicapped.

"It's enactment would, in the first instance, do what this Administration - which is supposed to speak for Business, and should, therefore, presumably use business-like methods of administration - has never done, establish a definite coordination of the present 35 Federal agencies, each of which now has a part of the general Handicapped program.

"The farcial exhibition of Administration Leaders rushing bravely into the battle last year, to save the poor, dear Handicapped, by the tragically weak and inadequate Vocational Rehabilitation amendments the Administration then proposed, can be remedied, if Congress will enact the FEDERAL AGENCY FOR HANDICAPPED bill.

"This would get a systematized method of operation into function, in which Congress, the President, the public, and the Handicapped, themselves, would all benefit, - particularly the taxpayers, who are now pouring billions into endless ratholes of alleged public assistance, which is neither 'public', nor 'assistance', but merely is a miserable substitute, - a palliative, but not a remedy for the needs and problems of nearly 40,000,000 Handicapped, many of whom require treatment, training, counseling, and selective placement, so as to take their places in the ranks of productive workers, instead of being taxeaters."

ORGANIZED LABOR RESPONSIBLE FOR DEVELOPING REHABILITATION

June 20, 1920, the first Federal Vocational Training Act, from which all subsequent legislation in this field emanated, was put onto the books, chiefly by Organized Labor.

Therefore, Labor's stake in enactment of the FEDERAL AGENCY FOR HANDICAPPED bill is tremendous, considering that Laboring people suffer an average of 2,000,000 accidents, yearly, in Industry alone, from which some 350,000 permanent impairments result, and this does not include results of general illnesses, injuries on the farms, etc.

The appalling picture of accidents, injuries, and disease shows that, annually, a huge Human Scrap Pile is the result, and the pitifully inadequate Federal-State Rehabilitation program only aided some 60,000 out of the 350,000 permanent impaired, in 1954, and did not even scratch the tremendous backlog, with its approximate

40,000,000 Handicapped, of whom from 7,000,000 to 9,000,000 are from 60% to 100% disabled.

IMPRESSIVE LIST OF SENATE AND HOUSE SPONSORS

Many of the ablest and most progressive Members of Senate and House are among the Sponsors of the FEDERAL AGENCY FOR HANDICAPPED bills:

Senators, James E. Murray, (Mont.); Matthew M. Neely, Harley M. Kilgore, (W. Va.); George A. Smathers, (Fla.); Lister Hill, (Ala.); Warren G. Magnuson, (Wash.); Estes Kefauver, (Tenn.); William Langer, (N.D.); Herbert H. Lehman, (N.Y.); John J. Sparkman, (Ala.); Frank Carlson, (Kans.); Hubert H. Humphrey, (Minn.); Ralph E. Flanders, (Vt.); Pat McNamara, (Mich.); Wayne Morse, and Richard L. Neuberger, (Ore.).

Representatives, Majority Leader John W. McCormack, (Mass.); Charles E. Bennett, (Fla.); John D. Dingell, (Mich.); Gardner Withrow, (Wis.); Mrs. Coya Knutson, (Minn.); Thor Tollefson, (Wash.); George M. Rhodes, (Pa.); Augustine B. Kelley, (Pa.); Mrs. Vera Buchanan, (Pa.); Earl Chudoff, (Pa.); John P. Saylor, (Pa.); Cleveland M. Bailey, (W. Va.); Charles A. Buckley, (N. Y.); Louis C. Rabaut, (Mich.); Ray J. Madden, (Ind.); Barratt O'Hara (Ill.); Harold D. Donohue, (Mass.); Mrs. Martha W. Griffiths, (Mich.).

TAX EXEMPTION BILL

H.R. 2580, a "BILL TO GRANT ADDITIONAL TAX EXEMPTIONS AND DEDUCTIONS TO TAXPAYERS WHO ARE PERMANENTLY DISABLED, AND TO ALLOW ADDITIONAL INCOME TAX EXEMPTIONS TO TAXPAYERS SUPPORTING DEPENDENTS WHO ARE PERMANENTLY DISABLED", has been introduced by Ranking Majority Member, House Ways and Means Committee, - John D. Dingell, (Mich.).

AMENDMENTS TO INTERSTATE COMMERCE ACT

S. 1777, introduced by Sen. George A. Smathers, (Fla.), and H.R. 6111, introduced by Chairman of the House Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce, J. Percy Priest, (Tenn.) "AMENDS THE INTERSTATE COMMERCE ACT, IN ORDER TO AUTHORIZE COMMON CARRIERS BY RAILROAD TO CARRY A DISABLED INDIVIDUAL REQUIRING AN ATTENDANT, AND SUCH ATTENDANT, AT THE USUAL FARE CHARGED FOR ONE PERSON."

DESCRIPTIONS OF BILLS

The FEDERAL AGENCY FOR HANDICAPPED bills present the following program in furtherance of the general welfare, and to aid the national defense:

1. Provide for maximum extension of medical services; vocational guidance and counseling; education and training, and full employment opportunities to citizens handicapped by physical or mental disabilities.
2. Establishes an independent Federal Agency for Handicapped, and abolishes the present Office for Vocational Rehabilitation, and transfers its functions, employees, etc., to the new Agency.
3. Sets up an Advisory Council on Affairs of the Handicapped in the Agency, consisting of three qualified persons representing Industry; three, representing Labor; three, representing Farmers and Stock-Raisers; three, who are, themselves, Physically Handicapped, to represent Physically Handicapped; three, from the Arts and Sciences, and three, from those experienced in Public Affairs.

4. Establishes in Agency an Office of Services for Blind, to coordinate the present scrambled and farflung setup for Blind, in Federal Service.
5. Establishes Cooperative Enterprises for Handicapped, with a \$10,000,000 Revolving Fund.
6. Establishes Regional Rehabilitation Centers for Handicapped.
7. Provides Special Programs for Severely Handicapped, including establishment of workshops.
8. Establishes a Federal Services to Handicapped Revolving Loan Fund, from which States may borrow money at such times as their own funds for vocational rehabilitation or employment of Handicapped, or for both, are exhausted, and appropriates an initial sum of \$10,000,000 for this Revolving Fund.
9. Establishes a Division for Handicapped in the U. S. Civil Service Commission, to facilitate proper recruitment, examination and appointment of qualified Handicapped.
10. Promotes Public Safety programs to eliminate and prevent conditions tending to promote injuries or disease in public buildings, institutions, parks, and other public places.
11. Provides for reports from all Federal agencies which now receive, or may in future receive, as a part of their functions, reports relating to Handicapped persons.
12. Provides variable grants to States, for Vocational Rehabilitation.
13. Provides grants to Handicapped who require special home training.
14. Establishes a Federal Second Injury Tax and Fund, to facilitate favorable action enabling many of the more than 3,000,000 Handicapped who have more than one disability, and who are now debarred from employment in many States, an opportunity to earn their own living.
15. Establishes a Commission to Survey and Determine Proper Selective Placement of Handicapped. Placement is the weak spot in today's Handicapped program and it is absolutely imperative that we accurately evaluate the capacities and abilities of Handicapped, so as to fit them into jobs they can satisfactorily fill, wherein their particular disability is not a factor.

Primarily through AFPH's efforts it has been shown, these past 12 years, that some 9,000 of the 25,339 different jobs in the Occupational Directory, can be satisfactorily filled by the variously Handicapped. We must now complete the job survey, and the only way to do it is, by establishing this Survey Commission for that specific purpose.

16. Provides interpreters for deaf and other physically handicapped who may be called as litigants or witnesses before Federal Courts, Departments or Agencies, or Congressional Committees.
17. Amends Interstate Commerce Act, so that common carriers may carry severely handicapped who require attendants on trains, ships, etc., under the same rules and regulations as now apply to the Blind.

18. Provides for grants to Home-Bound Handicapped.
19. Establishes a Federal Interagency Committee on Rehabilitation and Employment of Handicapped, with representatives thereon from each of the 35 Federal agencies now having a part of the program, so that the over-all program can be coordinated, which has never been done before, and which present condition, doubtless, contributes to waste, inefficiency, and duplication of expense of taxpayers' money.
20. Establishes in the Department of Labor, in collaboration with States, and other public and private agencies, Training Courses to develop specialists in Counseling and Placement of Handicapped, to fill a great national need,-- there now being only a bare handful of people throughout the Nation who have any practical experience or proven ability in placement of the millions of Handicapped.