

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

I M P O R T A N T

June 25, 1954

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

Greeting:

Today, our AFPH-Labor Associates Committee, on which AFL, CIO, UMWA, and Rail Brotherhoods are officially represented, completed a breakdown of the bills, S. 2759 and H.R. 9640, reported, this week, by Senate Committee on Labor and Public Welfare, and House Committee on Education and Labor, to amend the Vocational Rehabilitation Act.

By Convention action, AFL, CIO, UMWA, and several Rail Brotherhoods have endorsed the bills to establish a FEDERAL AGENCY FOR HANDICAPPED, and, study of the Administration's proposed bills, S. 2759 and H.R. 9640, simply rivets the need for the FEDERAL AGENCY FOR HANDICAPPED bills, and attached hereto, are copies of my Report on the Legislation Situation; Breakdown of S. 2759 and H.R. 9640, which were agreed to by the Labor Associates Committee, today.

You are urged to immediately wire, phone, write, or see your Congressman, and demand that they endeavor to substitute the FEDERAL AGENCY FOR HANDICAPPED bills for the Administration bills, when they reach the Senate and House floors, which is anticipated within next 10 days. Or, if that move fails, to endeavor to insert important sections of the FEDERAL AGENCY bill into whatever bills may be the vehicle.

Immediate action is imperative. Administration bills provide a maximum appropriation (for which we have to wait 4 years) of \$65,000,000, whereas the Labor-backed FEDERAL AGENCY bill would appropriate approximately \$250,000,000 RIGHT NOW.

Your support is needed and will be appreciated.

Fraternally,

PAUL A. STRACHAN

President

Encl.

(July 1954)

STATEMENT OF PAUL A. STRACHAN, PRESIDENT
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COMPARISON BETWEEN S. 2759 AND H.R. 9640

S. 2759

H.R. 9640

Sec. 2. AUTHORIZATION
Practically same as H.R. 9640

EXCEPTION:
Grants to States:
\$23,000,000 (present approp-
riation) used as base of com-
putation, States being granted
80% of excess of \$23,000,000.

Sec. 1.-2. Practically same as S. 2759

EXCEPTION: Funds for year ending
June 30, 1955, \$30,000,000
Year ending 6/30/56 45,000,000
Year ending 6/30/57 55,000,000
Year ending 6/30/58
and successive years 65,000,000

\$23,000,000 used as base of computation.

Sec. 3. GRANTS TO STATES FOR EXTENSION
AND IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS.

Practically same as H.R. 9640

Sec. C (1) S. 2759 sets up
"National Advisory Council on
Vocational Rehabilitation", in
HEW with 12 members, with Sec'y
HEW, (or designate as Chairman,-
(quote) - "The 12 appointed
members shall be leaders in
fields concerned with vocational
rehabilitation or in public
affairs, and six of such 12 shall
be selected from leading medi-
cal, educational, or scientific
authorities who are outstanding
for their work in the vocation-
al rehabilitation of disabled
persons", etc.

Sec. 3. GRANTS TO STATES FOR EXTENSION
AND IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS.

Practically same as S. 2759

THERE IS NO INDUSTRY, LABOR, FARM, OR HANDICAPPED REPRESENTATION IN EITHER BILL

Sec. 5. STATE PLANS:

Practically same as H.R. 9640.

S. 2759 provides States may
appeal from Secretary's decision
to Supreme Court of U. S.

Sec. 5. STATE PLANS:

Practically same as S. 2759.

EXCEPTION: Par. 6, has follow-
ing amendment, which, as yet,
(June 23,) has NOT been printed
in House bill:

S. 2759 (Continued)

H.R. 9640 (Continued)

"..but the Secretary shall exercise no authority with respect to the selection, method of selection, tenure of office, or compensation of any individual employed in accordance with such provisions."

H.R. 9640 provides States may appeal from Secretary's decisions by appeal to U. S. District Court.

Another amendment deals with those to be trained as workers for and with Handi-capped, - language to be worked out by House Legislative Draftsmen.

ADMINISTRATION

Same as H.R. 9640

ADMINISTRATION

Same as S. 2759

Sec. 8. Provides "PROMOTION OF EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES", etc.

REPORTS

Same as H.R. 9640

REPORTS

Same as S. 2759

AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATION FOR ADMINISTRATION

Same as H.R. 9640

AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATION FOR ADMINISTRATION

Same as S. 2759

DEFINITIONS

Same as H.R. 9640

DEFINITIONS

Same as S. 2759

TRANSITION PROVISIONS

Practically same as H.R. 9640
EXCEPTION: (See H.R. 9640,-----

TRANSITION PROVISIONS

Practically same as S. 2759
EXCEPTION: Additional paragraph relating to sums for grants to States and District of Columbia, but not sufficiently important to fight about.

SHORT TITLE (Same as H.R. 9640)
"VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION ACT"

SHORT TITLE (Same as S. 2759)
"VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION ACT"

S. 2759 (Continued)

H.R. 9640 (Continued)

EFFECTIVE DATE, July 1, 1954
(Same as H.R. 9640)

EFFECTIVE DATE, July 1, 1954
(Same as S. 2759)

S. 2759 has NO "AMENDMENTS TO RANDOLPH-SHEPPARD VENDING STAND ACT" (for Blind, in Federal Buildings)

H.R. 9640 has extensive amendments to Randolph-Sheppard Act, and while these are highly discriminatory, and bar other, severely handicapped people from opportunity to operate Stands in Federal Buildings and thus prevent Cerebral Palsied, those afflicted with Arthritis and Rheumatism; Muscular Dystrophy, Multiple Sclerosis, Epilepsy, and other cripplers that cause from 75% to 100% disability, (Blind are rated, "Partially sighted, and Totally Blind, usually ranging from 60% to 100% disability) still, at this moment, since there are 11 National Organizations working for Blind, (150,000 Totally Blind; 100,000 Partially Sighted) the remainder of the 38,000,000 Handicapped, of whom at least 7,000,000 are Severely Handicapped, ARE NOT ORGANIZED IN THEIR RESPECTIVE GROUPS.

Therefore, at this time, I do not believe it justified to spend time and effort to bring about a fairer arrangement. This can be done, later, by an entirely new bill, based upon that section of our present FEDERAL AGENCY FOR HANDICAPPED bill relating to operation of these stands by Blind, and other Severely Handicapped.

The foregoing, in substance, affords a break-down of the Senate and House bills.

S U M M A R Y

1. In neither the Senate nor House bills is there any representation by Industry, Labor, Handicapped, etc. This, in S. 2759, can be attempted, by submitting amendment to the section relating to the "Vocational Rehabilitation Council", and substituting therefor, our own "COUNCIL ON AFFAIRS OF THE HANDICAPPED". This should be done, IF we are still demanding that this Handicapped program be integrated into, and made a regular part, now, and later, of Labor-Management Relations.

2. In neither Senate nor House bills is there any coordination of activities of the 35 Federal Agencies, each of which has a part of the Handicapped program. Such coordination is vital to the program, and as a protection to all taxpayers, as well as the Handicapped, it must be had. We can get Senators and Representatives to attempt substitution.

SUMMARY of S. 2759 and H.R. 9640, and Recommendations (Continued)

3. There is no "spelling out" of a program. To the contrary, the Senate and House bills, very largely, simply dump money into the lap of the Secretary of HEW, and leave development and expansion of the program up to her. I am opposed to this, but, practically, as at this stage, it may not be possible to spell out a definite plan, and this, along with many other sections of the proposed Act, must later be dealt with in new legislation.
4. In neither Senate nor House bills is there any mention of the Labor-approved sections of the FEDERAL AGENCY FOR HANDICAPPED bill, which are, specifically;
- (a) An Independent Agency for Handicapped, based, for housekeeping purposes, in the Department of Labor.
 - (b) Establishes the "ADVISORY COUNCIL ON AFFAIRS OF THE HANDICAPPED", with representation from Industry, Labor, Farm, Professional, and Handicapped groups.
 - (c) Establishes Office of Services for Blind.
 - (d) Cooperative Enterprises for Handicapped, with an initial appropriation of \$10,000,000 and \$5,000,000 annually, for next five consecutive years.
 - (e) Inter-Agency Committee on Rehabilitation and Employment of Handicapped, to coordinate activities of 35 Federal Agencies now having part of the program, each.
 - (f) \$60 monthly Federal grant to totally disabled, declared by Federal or State agencies to be "unfeasible for rehabilitation". (States may add to this \$60.)
 - (g) \$5,000,000 initial, and \$2,000,000 continuing annual appropriation for Grants for Training of Home-Bound Handicapped.
 - (h) \$10,000,000 Revolving Loan Fund, from which States which have exhausted their appropriations for services to Handicapped may borrow money, between sessions of their own Legislatures. As it is now, half the States are broke, all the time, for this reason, and lack of means of getting funds to carry on.
 - (i) Division for Handicapped in U.S. Civil Service Commission to facilitate examination, and appointment of otherwise qualified, but Physically Handicapped applicants.
 - (j) Reports from all Federal agencies having parts of Handicapped program.
 - (k) Special programs for Severely Handicapped, of whom there are from 7,000,000 to 9,000,000 from 60% to 100% disabled.
 - (l) Establishment of Rehabilitation Centers throughout U.S.A.
 - (m) Establishes a Federal Second Injury Tax and Fund

SUMMARY of S. 2759 and H.R. 9640, and Recommendations (Continued)

- (n) Provides legal definitions of a physically handicapped person and a person totally disabled, unfeasible for rehabilitation.

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So far as I am concerned, the plan has not changed. It will be, to attempt to substitute S. 2570 for S. 2759, when the latter bill reaches the Senate floor for a vote, - and, in the House, to attempt to substitute H.R. 2096 or its companion bills, for H.R. 9640. And, if these moves to substitute the FEDERAL AGENCY FOR HANDICAPPED bill for the Administration-McConnell measures, then, to amend those bills, by inserting such sections of our FEDERAL AGENCY FOR HANDICAPPED bill as may be possible.

I point out, the FEDERAL AGENCY FOR HANDICAPPED bills present an over-all program, calling for approximately \$250,000,000, while the maximum, under Senate and House bills, for the immediate moment would only be \$30,000,000, and gradually increase to \$65,000,000 (in the House bill) by 1958. In short, the Administration's handicapped program, like many of its other programs, "IS TOO LITTLE, AND TOO LATE."

Because, employers, and the public, even today, believe that using the word "disabled", connotes INABILITY TO DO A JOB, and since the words "disabled persons" are used, indiscriminately, in both Senate and House bills, I move that we ask an amendment be adopted, as follows:

"That, because of public misapprehension and misunderstanding, there has grown to be a belief that using the word "disabled", to describe the Handicapped, implies disability and inability to do a job, which situation is resented and deplored by all handicapped and their friends, that, in these bills, the words "disabled" or "disabled persons", be stricken out, and in their place there be substituted the words "physically handicapped".