

PROVIDING INCREASES IN THE RATES OF PENSION PAYABLE TO SPANISH-AMERICAN WAR AND CIVIL WAR VETERANS AND THEIR DEPENDENTS

JULY 11 (legislative day, JULY 10), 1947.—Ordered to be printed

Mr. MILLIKIN, from the Committee on Finance, submitted the following

REPORT

[To accompany H. R. 3961]

The Committee on Finance, to whom was referred the bill (H. R. 3961) to provide increases in the rates of pension payable to Spanish-American War and Civil War veterans and their dependents, having considered the same, report favorably thereon, without amendment, and recommend that the bill do pass.

The House report on this bill is self-explanatory and is as follows:

GENERAL STATEMENT

Hearings were conducted by subcommittee, and the bill was considered by subcommittee and full committee. Testimony thereon was presented to the subcommittee by representatives of interested veterans' organizations.

PURPOSE OF THE BILL

The bill proposes (1) to increase by 20 percent service pensions to veterans of the Spanish-American War, including the Boxer Rebellion and the Philippine Insurrection, and the widows and children of such veterans, under laws reenacted by Public Law 269, Seventy-fourth Congress, August 13, 1935; (2) to increase by 20 percent service pensions to veterans of the Civil War and the widows and children of such veterans, which are payable under any public laws administered by the Veterans' Administration.

JUSTIFICATION

In recommending this bill your committee invites attention to the following factors considered: (a) The increased cost of living and increased pay to Federal and other employees; (b) as to the Spanish-American War veterans, no increase has been granted the most seriously disabled—those entitled to \$75 per month for permanent and total disability or age 65 and those entitled to the \$100 rate for regular aid and attendance, the former since March 1, 1944, and the latter since May 24, 1938; (c) the other rates of the Spanish-American War group which would receive a 20-percent increase are at present inadequate con-

sidering the cost of living and average age of these veterans; (d) the Civil War veterans have not been granted an increase in the \$100 rate for regular aid and attendance, the only rate now being paid to survivors of that war, since June 9, 1930; (e) the World War I and II veterans received an increase in the rate of permanent and total disability by the act of August 8, 1946; (f) widows of World Wars I and II veterans receive \$42 per month, whereas widows of veterans of the Spanish-American War (1898-1902) and the Civil War (1861-66) generally receive \$40 per month.

ESTIMATE OF COST

The estimate of cost furnished by the Veterans' Administration states that the provisions of section 1 of the bill, namely, the 20-percent increase for veterans of the Spanish-American War, including the Boxer Rebellion and the Philippine Insurrection, and their dependents, would affect approximately 111,700 veterans, with an estimated cost to the Government of \$20,112,000 the first year, and the dependents of approximately 74,110 deceased veterans, with an estimated cost of \$7,338,000 for the first year, or a total estimated cost of \$27,450,000 for the first year.

The Veterans' Administration estimates that section 2 of the bill, namely, to increase by 20 percent the service pension rates payable under public laws for Civil War veterans and their dependents, would affect approximately 90 veterans, at a cost of \$21,600 the first year, and the dependents of approximately 15,800 Civil War veterans at a cost of \$1,467,000 for the first year, or a total as to Civil War veterans and dependents of \$1,488,600 the first year.

The grand total estimate of cost covering the 20-percent increase to veterans of the Spanish-American War and Civil War and their dependents as furnished by the Veterans' Administration approximates \$28,938,600 for the first year.

The mortality rate for Spanish-American War veterans is approximately 74 per 1,000 and their average age 72 years. It is estimated that during the fiscal year 1947 there will be a decrease from the veteran pension rolls of approximately 8,000 veterans.

As to dependents of Spanish-American War veterans, it is estimated that there will be a net gain to the pension rolls of approximately 1,500 for the fiscal year 1947. The average age of the widows of this group is 67 years and their mortality rate approximately 44 per 1,000.

As to Civil War, the veterans' decrease from the pension rolls for the 10-month period from June 30, 1946, to April 30, 1947, was 55, or an average of 5½ per month. Their average age is 100 years and the mortality rate 427 per 1,000. The widows' decrease from the rolls for the 9-month period from June 30, 1946 to March 31, 1947, was 1,948, or approximately 216 per month. Their average age is 81 years and the mortality rate 138 per 1,000 for the year 1946.

Accordingly, it will be noted that there will be a rapid increase in the total number of veterans and dependents combined going off the pension rolls year by year and that the cost will be sharply reduced by the increased rate of deaths as time goes on.

The committee is in accord with the purposes of the bill and recommend its enactment.

