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{ REPORT  
{ No. 1665

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## ADDITIONAL HOSPITAL, DORMITORY, AND OUT-PATIENT DISPENSARY FACILITIES

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FEBRUARY 17 (calendar day, FEBRUARY 19), 1931.—Ordered to be printed

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

### REPORT

[To accompany H. R. 16982]

The Committee on Finance, to whom was referred the bill (H. R. 16982) to authorize an appropriation to provide additional hospital, domiciliary, and out-patient dispensary facilities for persons entitled to hospitalization under the World War veterans' act, 1924, as amended, and for other purposes, having considered the same, report favorably thereon with the recommendation that the bill do pass with the following amendment:

Strike out all after the enacting clause and insert in lieu thereof the following:

That in order to provide sufficient hospital, domiciliary, and out-patient dispensary facilities to care for the increasing load of disabled veterans of all wars and to enable the Veterans' Administration to care for its beneficiaries in Veterans' Administration institutions, rather than in contract temporary facilities and other institutions, the Administrator of Veterans' Affairs, subject to the approval of the President, is hereby authorized to provide additional hospital, domiciliary, and out-patient dispensary facilities for persons entitled to hospitalization or domiciliary care under the World War veterans' act, 1924, as amended, or the various laws pertaining to the Bureau of National Homes, formerly the National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers, by purchase, replacement, and remodeling or extension of existing plants, and by construction on sites now owned by the Government or on sites to be acquired by purchase, condemnation, gift, or otherwise of such hospitals, domiciliary, and out-patient dispensary facilities to include the necessary buildings and auxiliary structures, mechanical equipment, approach work, roads, and trackage facilities leading thereto, sidewalks abutting hospital reservations, vehicles, livestock, furniture, equipment, and accessories; and also to provide accommodations for officers, nurses, and attending personnel; and also to provide proper and suitable recreational centers; and the Administrator of Veterans' Affairs is authorized to accept gifts or donations for any of the purposes named herein. Such hospital and domiciliary plants to be constructed shall be of fireproof construction, and existing plants purchased shall be remodeled to be fireproof, and the location and nature thereof, whether for domiciliary care or the treatment of tuberculosis, neuropsychiatric, or general medical and surgical cases shall be in the discretion of the Administrator of Veterans' Affairs, subject to the approval of the President.

SEC. 2. The construction of new hospitals, domiciliary facilities, or dispensaries, or the replacement, extension, alteration, remodeling, or repair of all hospitals, domiciliary facilities, or dispensaries heretofore or hereafter constructed shall be done in such manner as the President may determine, and he is authorized to require the architectural, engineering, constructing, or other forces of any of the departments of the Government to do or assist in such work, and to employ individuals and agencies not now connected with the Government, if in his opinion desirable, at such compensation as he may consider reasonable.

SEC. 3. For carrying into effect the preceding sections relating to additional hospitals and domiciliary and outpatient dispensary facilities there is hereby authorized to be appropriated, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, the sum of \$20,877,000 to be immediately available and to remain available until expended: *Provided*, That not to exceed 3 per centum of this sum shall be available for the employment in the District of Columbia and in the field of necessary technical and clerical assistants at the customary rates of compensation, exclusively to aid in the preparation of the plans and specifications for the projects authorized herein and for the supervision of the execution thereof, and for traveling expenses, field office equipment, and supplies in connection therewith.

SEC. 4. The President is further authorized to accept from any State or other political subdivision, or from any corporation, association, individual or individuals, any building, structure, equipment, or grounds suitable for the care of the disabled, with due regard to fire or other hazards, state of repair, and all other pertinent considerations, and to designate what department, bureau, board, commission, or other governmental agency shall have the control and management thereof.

SEC. 5. The Administrator of Veterans' Affairs with the approval of the President, is further authorized to use all or any part of the money authorized to be appropriated by the provisions of the act approved May 16, 1930 (Public, Numbered 230, Seventy-first Congress), the act approved June 21, 1930 (Public, Numbered 405, Seventy-first Congress), and the act approved July 1, 1930 (Public, Numbered 492, Seventy-first Congress), for extending the facilities at that national homes designated therein or at any other national home or hospital under the jurisdiction of the Veterans' Administration, or for any of the purposes set forth in section 1 of this act.

SEC. 6. Effective as of the first day of the third calendar month following approval of this act, the monthly amount of compensation, pension, disability allowance, or retirement pay under the disabled emergency officers' retirement act, payable to any veteran who is being maintained by the Veterans' Administration in an institution, shall not exceed 50 per centum of the amount to which he would otherwise be entitled so long as he shall remain in said institution: *Provided*, That the amount payable shall not be reduced to less than \$20 per month: *Provided further*, That in those cases where the amount to which he would otherwise be entitled is less than \$20 per month no reduction whatever shall be made: *Provided further*, That if such veteran has a wife, a child or children under the age of sixteen years or of any age if permanently incapable of self-support by reason of mental or physical defect, or dependent parents or parent, the difference between the amount specified herein and the amount which would be payable except for the provisions hereof, shall be paid to the wife, child or children, and dependent parent or parents in such proportions as may be fixed by regulations prescribed by the administrator.

The Committee on Finance conducted hearings for the purpose of determining the need, if any, for new construction to meet the demand for hospitalization under the World War veterans' act, 1924, as amended, and for domiciliary care under the various statutes administered by the Bureau of National Homes (formerly the National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers), and after careful review and study of the evidence submitted, the committee is of the opinion that a program of construction should be initiated and completed as soon as possible to meet the needs of such services up to 1935. To this end the amount included in the House bill, namely, \$12,500,000, has been increased to \$17,027,000. To this amount has been added \$2,850,000 to provide certain additional construction for national

homes, which were covered by H. R. 16658, making a total of \$20,877,000. Various construction programs were submitted to the committee, including the estimates of needs furnished by the Administrator of Veterans' Affairs. Your committee, however, believes that the location of the new hospitals and homes and the additions to existing hospitals and homes can better be left to the discretion of the Federal Board of Hospitalization with the approval of the President. This board is composed of outstanding men thoroughly versed in the subject of hospitalization and domiciliary care and after comprehensive study will be in a position to best locate facilities authorized in this bill where they are most needed.

Sections 1, 2, 3, and 4 of the bill are for the purpose of generally authorizing the appropriation and are in the same language previously used in authorization acts of a similar nature.

Section 5 of the bill authorizes the Administrator of Veterans' Affairs, with the approval of the President, to reallocate, if found desirable, certain projects heretofore authorized by the public acts enumerated therein. This section will permit of the building of certain projects either at the places heretofore authorized or elsewhere and will permit distribution of the money authorized for more than one unit.

Section 6 of the bill authorizes a reduction in monetary payments, effective as of the first day of the first calendar month following the approval of the act, to any veteran who is being maintained by the Veterans' Administration in an institution to 50 per cent of the amount to which he would otherwise be entitled so long as he shall remain in such institution. A proviso is added, however, to the effect that in no event shall the amount of the monetary payment be reduced to less than \$20 per month, and, further, if the veteran has a wife, child or children, or dependent parent or parents, that the difference between the amounts specified in the section, namely, 50 per cent, and the amount which would otherwise be payable is to be paid to the wife, child or children, or dependent parent or parents, in such proportions as may be prescribed by regulations.