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SENATE

{ REPORT
No. 333

APPORTIONMENT RETIREMENT PAY TO WIVES AND CHILDREN OF DISABLED EMERGENCY OFFICERS

FEBRUARY 24 (calendar day, FEBRUARY 25), 1932.—Ordered to be printed

Mr. WALSH of Massachusetts, from the Committee on Finance, submitted the following

REPORT

[To accompany S. 2955]

The Committee on Finance, to whom was referred the bill (S. 2955) to amend the World War veterans' act, 1924, as amended, having considered the same, report it back to the Senate and recommend that the bill do pass.

The purpose of this bill is to provide that retired emergency officers' retirement pay may be apportioned, under the emergency officers' retirement act, to the wife and children of a disabled officer in the same form and manner as disability compensation is apportioned at present when compensation is granted to veterans, whether enlisted men or officers.

The facts are that when the emergency officers' retirement act was passed no provision was made to permit the apportionment to a wife or child of a disabled officer, when separated from each other, as is provided in the general law when compensation is granted to a disabled veteran. This bill would apply the apportionment principle of the general compensation law to the emergency officers' retirement act. It would involve no cost to the Federal Government. Its enactment is favored by the Administrator of Veterans' Affairs.

The letter of the Administrator of Veterans' Affairs is as follows:

VETERANS' ADMINISTRATION,
Washington, February 2, 1932.

Hon. REED SMOOT,
Chairman Committee on Finance, United States Senate.

MY DEAR SENATOR SMOOT: Receipt is acknowledged of your communication of January 14, 1932, with which you forwarded for investigation and report a copy of S. 2955, Seventy-second Congress, a bill to amend the World War veterans' act, 1924, as amended.

The purpose of this bill is to amend section 202 (12) of the World War veterans' act, 1924, as amended, to provide that retired pay payable under the emergency

officers' retirement act may be apportioned to the wife and the children of the veteran in the same form and manner as compensation is apportioned at present under said section 202 (12).

This administration is of the opinion that the provision for apportionment of compensation where the man is separated from his wife and children was wise. There have, however, been many cases where veterans were transferred from the disability compensation rolls to the retirement rolls in which it was necessary immediately to discontinue the payments in favor of wives and children because no authority existed for the apportionment of retirement pay. Needless to say hardship resulted where the man was unwilling to make voluntary contribution for the support of his dependents. Every man has a duty to support his wife and children and although this duty ordinarily will be enforced by the courts, any benefits payable to him by this administration can not be attached by court order. I am in favor of the enactment of legislation of the nature proposed in this bill.

A study of inequalities in laws relating to veterans is now being made by the Veterans' Administration, and it is my hope at some time in the future to present to the Congress a report indicating these many inequalities and to make definite recommendation as to the general policy of the Government in dealing with veterans. However, you will appreciate that such study and report will require careful consideration and I can not, at this time, forecast when the same will be ready for submission.

While it is my belief that it would, in general, be desirable to have all inequalities considered together, it may appear to the Congress that some disparities are so unjust as to require early adjustment.

There will be no cost involved in the apportionment of retirement pay under this proposed measure, except a small administrative cost which it is impossible to estimate.

A copy of this letter is inclosed for your use.

Very truly yours,

FRANK T. HINES, *Administrator.*

