

DETAIL OF PERSONS IN THE FIELD FORCE OF THE CUSTOMS SERVICE TO THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA.

APRIL 20 (calendar day, JUNE 22), 1922.—Ordered to be printed.

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

REPORT.

[To accompany H. J. Res. 344.]

The Committee on Finance, to whom was referred the resolution (H. J. Res. 344) to authorize the Secretary of the Treasury to detail four persons paid from the appropriation for the collection of customs, having considered the same, report favorably thereon with the recommendation that the joint resolution do pass without amendment.

The letter of the Secretary of the Treasury fully explains the necessity for this legislation and is hereto attached and made a part of this report.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,  
Washington, June 9, 1922.

HON. JOSEPH W. FORDNEY,  
*Chairman Committee on Ways and Means,  
House of Representatives, Washington, D. C.*

MY DEAR MR. FORDNEY: I am in receipt of a letter from the clerk of your committee, Clayton F. Moore, inclosing, for such comment as I wish to make, a copy of H. J. Res. 344, introduced by Mr. Madden, chairman of the Committee on Appropriations, authorizing the Secretary of the Treasury to use in the District of Columbia during the fiscal year 1923, for and in connection with the enforcement of the laws relating to customs, not to exceed at any one time four persons, detailed from the field force of the customs service.

In the act of March 4, 1921 (the sundry civil bill for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1922, 41 Stat. 1374), there is the following provision:

"The Secretary of the Treasury is authorized to use for and in connection with the enforcement of the laws relating to the Treasury Department and the several branches of the public service under its control, not exceeding at any one time four persons paid from the appropriation for the collection of customs, four persons paid from the appropriation for salaries and expenses of internal revenue agents or from the appropriation for the foregoing purpose, and four persons paid from the appropriation for suppressing counterfeiting and other crimes, but not exceeding six persons so detailed shall be employed at any one time hereunder: *Provided*, That nothing herein contained shall be construed to deprive the Secretary of the Treasury from making any detail now otherwise authorized by existing law."

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Similar provisions were in various previous corresponding acts.

The act of February 17, 1922, covering appropriations for the Treasury Department for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1923, however, contains no such provision, although a similar provision, in so far as it relates to customs, has been inserted in the pending tariff bill.

The Comptroller General of the United States has informally expressed the opinion that the provision in the act of March 4, 1921, quoted on the first page of this letter is temporary legislation and expires with the appropriation in which enacted. If the Comptroller General should officially rule that the services of the four officers could not be continued in the District of Columbia after June 30, it would seriously embarrass this department in the administration of the customs laws and would result in no saving, but would probably cause an increase in the expenses of the customs administration because of the traveling expenses involved.

In view of the foregoing and of the uncertainty as to the time of the passage of the pending tariff bill, I urgently recommend the passage of H. J. Res. 344.

Very truly yours,

A. W. MELLON, *Secretary.*