

# Calendar No. 1829

70TH CONGRESS }  
2d Session }

SENATE

} REPORT  
} No. 1800

## RELIEF OF CERTAIN PATIENTS AT UNITED STATES VETERANS' HOSPITAL, SUNMOUNT, N. Y.

FEBRUARY 15 (calendar day, FEBRUARY 18), 1929.—Ordered to be printed

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

### REPORT

[To accompany H. R. 9966]

The Committee on Finance, to whom was referred the bill (H. R. 9966) to provide for the reimbursement of certain patients at the United States Veterans' Hospital, Sunmount, N. Y., for loss and damage to personal effects, having had the same under consideration, report it back to the Senate without amendment and recommend that 'he bill do pass.

Following is a letter from the Director of the Veterans' Bureau regarding the bill:

JANUARY 7, 1929.

HON. REED SMOOT,

*Chairman Committee on Finance,*

*United States Senate, Washington, D. C.*

MY DEAR SENATOR SMOOT: I have the honor to invite the attention of the committee to H. R. 9966, a bill to provide for the reimbursement of certain patients at the United States Veterans' Hospital, Sunmount, N. Y., for loss and damage to personal effects, which passed the House of Representatives on March 19, 1928, and is now pending before your committee.

This bill proposes that the Director of the United States Veterans' Bureau be authorized and directed to reimburse, out of the appropriation for medical and hospital services, certain patients at the United States Veterans' Hospital, Sunmount, N. Y., who suffered loss and damage to their personal effects through the explosion of a rubber gasket in the high-pressure steam line passing through the storage room at that hospital. Investigation has disclosed that this occurrence was wholly accidental and was occasioned through no negligence on the part of the bureau or any of its employees. The patients' effects, consisting mostly of trunks and hand baggage, were damaged by the steam, which discolored, rusted, warped, and otherwise damaged the articles to the amount of \$420 in all.

The bureau has given consideration to the possibility of employing painters to enamel and refinish the damaged trunks, and to remove rust from the locks, hinges, etc., but has reached the conclusion that there is no legal authority for so doing. The suit cases damaged could, of course, not be restored by any painting or enameling process, nor could the leather fastenings, straps, and handles on trunks be

repaired satisfactorily. Section 31 of the World War veterans' act, which provides for reimbursing patients for losses sustained by fire will not cover the situation, nor will the act of December 28, 1922, inasmuch as there was no negligence on the part of any officer or employee of the Government.

I am very much interested in this bill and take occasion to recommend it to the favorable consideration of the committee with the request that it be reported favorably at the earliest possible date in order that its enactment at the present session may, if possible, be accomplished.

A copy of this letter is inclosed for your use.

Very truly yours,

FRANK T. HINES, *Director.*

The House report on the bill is as follows:

[House Report No. 857, Seventieth Congress, first session]

The Committee on World War Veterans' Legislation, to whom was referred the bill (H. R. 9966) to provide for the reimbursement of certain patients at the United States veterans' hospital, Sunmount, N. Y., for loss and damage to personal effects, having considered the same, report favorably thereon and recommend that the bill do pass without amendment.

This bill has the recommendation of the Director of the United States Veterans' Bureau, as more clearly appears in the annexed letter dated December 16, 1927.

DECEMBER 16, 1927.

Hon. ROYAL C. JOHNSON,

*Chairman Committee on World War Veterans' Legislation,  
House of Representatives, Washington, D. C.*

MY DEAR MR. JOHNSON: I have the honor to invite the attention of the committee to the attached draft of a special bill providing for the reimbursement of certain patients at United States veterans' hospital, Sunmount, N. Y., for loss and damage to their personal effects sustained by reason of the explosion of a rubber gasket in the high-pressure steam line passing through the storage room at that hospital. Investigation has disclosed that this occurrence was wholly accidental and was occasioned through no negligence on the part of the bureau or any of its employees. The patients' effects, consisting mostly of trunks and hand baggage, were damaged by the steam, which discolored, rusted, warped, and otherwise damaged the articles to the amount of \$420 in all. For the information of the committee there is inclosed copy of a report of survey showing the names of the patients and the amount of the individual damage.

The bureau has given consideration to the possibility of employing painters to enamel and refinish the damaged trunks, and to remove rust from the locks, hinges, etc., but has reached the conclusion that there is no legal authority for so doing. The suit cases damaged could, of course, not be restored by any painting or enameling process, nor could the leather fastenings, straps, and handles on trunks be repaired satisfactorily. Section 31 of the World War veterans' act, which provides for reimbursing patients for losses sustained by fire will not cover the situation, nor will the act of December 28, 1922, inasmuch as there was no negligence on the part of any officer or employee of the Government.

It is felt that these patients should not be obliged to suffer these losses without reimbursement and it is accordingly respectfully requested that the committee consider the matter and recommend to the Congress the approval of legislation authorizing their reimbursement.

The draft, which is inclosed for the use of the committee, will, if enacted into law, cover the situation.

A copy of this letter is inclosed for your use.

Very truly yours,

FRANK T. HINES, *Director.*

