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EMPLOYMENT WITHOUT COMPENSATION FROM
THE GOVERNMENT OF READERS FOR
BLIND GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES

GOVERNMENT

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HEARING
BEFORE THE
COMMITTEE ON
OFFICE AND CIVIL SERVICE
USE OF REPRESENTATIVES
EIGHTY-SEVENTH CONGRESS
SECOND SESSION

ON

H.R. 11523

A BILL TO AUTHORIZE THE EMPLOYMENT WITHOUT COMPEN-
SATION FROM THE GOVERNMENT OF READERS FOR BLIND
GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

MAY 24, 1962

Printed for the use of the
Committee on Post Office and Civil Service



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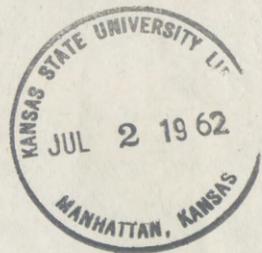
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SUBCOMMITTEE APPOINTED TO CONSIDER H.R. 11523

JOSEPH P. ADDABBO, New York, *Chairman*

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| MORRIS K. UDALL, Arizona | ROBERT J. CORBETT, Pennsylvania |
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EMPLOYMENT WITHOUT COMPENSATION FROM THE GOVERNMENT OF READERS FOR BLIND GOVERN- MENT EMPLOYEES

THURSDAY, MAY 24, 1962

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE
COMMITTEE ON POST OFFICE AND CIVIL SERVICE,
Washington, D.C.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 9 a.m., in room 215, House Office Building, Hon. Joseph P. Addabbo (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

Mr. ADDABBO. The subcommittee will come to order.

This subcommittee, consisting of Mr. Udall, Mr. Daniels, Mr. Corbett, Mr. Broyhill, and myself as chairman, is meeting this morning to consider H.R. 11523, introduced by Mr. Corbett, the distinguished ranking minority member of our full committee.

H.R. 11523 would authorize employment without compensation by the Federal Government of readers for blind Federal employees. The readers so employed, if not serving on a volunteer basis, could be paid out of the personal funds of the blind employee or by any nonprofit organization.

We have received the required administration reports on this measure, all of which are favorable, and, without objection, they will be made a part of the record.

(H.R. 11523 and the reports referred to follow:)

[H.R. 11523, 87th Cong., 2d sess.]

A BILL To authorize the employment without compensation from the Government of readers for blind Government employees, and for other purposes

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That (a) the head of each department is authorized, in his discretion, to employ, without regard to the civil service laws and the Classification Act of 1949, as amended, a reading assistant or assistants for any blind employee of such department, to serve without compensation from such department.

(b) Each such reading assistant may be paid and receive compensation for his services as reading assistant by and from such blind employee or any nonprofit organization, without regard to section 1914 of title 18, United States Code.

(c) For the purposes of this Act, the term—

(1) "department" means—

- (A) each executive department of the Federal Government;
- (B) each agency or independent establishment in the executive branch of such Government;
- (C) each corporation wholly owned or controlled by such Government;
- (D) the General Accounting Office;
- (E) the Library of Congress; and
- (F) the municipal government of the District of Columbia;

(2) "head of each department", with respect to the municipal government of the District of Columbia, means the Board of Commissioners of the District of Columbia;

(3) "blind employee" means an employee of a department who establishes, to the satisfaction of the appropriate authority of the department concerned and in accordance with regulations of the head of such department, that he has an impairment of sight, either permanent or temporary, which is so severe or disabling that the employment of a reading assistant or assistants for such employee is necessary or desirable to enable such employee properly to perform his work; and

(4) "nonprofit organization" means an organization determined by the Secretary of the Treasury to be an organization described in section 501(c) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 which is exempt from taxation under section 501(a) of such Code.

THE PRESIDENT'S COMMITTEE ON EMPLOYMENT
OF THE HANDICAPPED,
Washington, D.C., May 8, 1962.

HON. TOM MURRAY,
*Chairman, Committee on Post Office and Civil Service,
House of Representatives, Washington, D.C.*

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: As requested in your letter of May 3, I am pleased to review the draft bill H.R. 11523 and to comment on the proposed legislation and its purpose.

It is my firm opinion that the proposed legislation is needed and would accomplish the purpose of enabling blind persons qualified by special education or training but with little or no practical experience to make a start in employment in the Federal classified service.

In the several years since this committee was formed numerous cases of blind persons have been brought to our attention for advice concerning obtaining employment in professional occupations in the Federal classified service. Civil service examinations in the junior management and professional classifications have generally been opened to them and many have qualified for places on the civil service register. The vast majority have been young persons, recently out of college, with degrees in education, law, engineering, social work, management, economics, and other professional fields. When considered for appointment, responses of agency personnel and other management officers of Government have consistently been that the reading requirements of the positions would preclude their appointment even though highly qualified in other respects. It is probable that many other blind persons with a good potential for Government service would take preparatory courses fitting them for such employment if the possibilities of appointment were more promising.

In reviewing existing Civil Service Commission regulations, laws enacted by the Congress, and the policies and practices of Federal administrators, we have found little encouragement for appointment due to the reading requirements particularly in the lower grades. In the higher grades the reading function may and usually is performed by a secretary assigned to the employee. In the beginning grades secretarial services, if provided at all, are on a shared basis with several other employees of similar classifications.

It has been the consistent policy of this Committee since its early history to recommend the employment of all handicapped workers on the basis of their ability to successfully compete with other job applicants with similar qualifications but who are not handicapped. It is my firm opinion that the blind job applicant would be able in most circumstances to compete—without additional cost to the Government—if he were permitted to provide his own reading service. The draft legislation would make this possible for the beginning stages of employment or until the workers were established in a position grade that normally would include secretarial service for all incumbents.

The blind are a fair cross section of native abilities, intelligence, and potential capacities. Many could be successfully rehabilitated and established in professional and other highly qualified occupational fields if opportunity for competing with the seeing population were provided in the periods in their working life where dependence upon seeing persons for reading is necessary. It is my firm opinion that providing a statutory basis for provision for this function would make it possible for many to be employed who are now being rejected.

Probably some encouragement of the employing agencies will be needed but we believe with statutory approval through permissive legislation this Committee

and the appropriate divisions of the U.S. Civil Service Commission are in a much stronger position to provide for that need.

With the Federal Government taking the lead in making it possible for these professional and other job applicants needing reading service to "break into" Government employment, many State departments and local governmental units will be encouraged to take similar action.

I strongly recommend approval of this legislation.

Cordially,

MELVIN J. MAAS, *Chairman.*

U.S. CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION,
Washington, D.C., May 16, 1962.

HON. TOM MURRAY,
*Chairman, Committee on Post Office and Civil Service,
House of Representatives.*

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: This is in further reply to your letter of May 2, 1962, requesting our comments on H.R. 11523, a bill to authorize the employment without compensation from the Government of readers for blind Government employees, and for other purposes.

H.R. 11523 would authorize the head of each department and agency of the executive branch of the Government, each corporation wholly owned or controlled by the Government, the General Accounting Office, the Library of Congress, and the Board of Commissioners of the District of Columbia, to employ reading assistants for blind employees. Such reading assistants would be employed without regard to the civil service laws and the Classification Act, and would serve without compensation from the employing department or agency. The reading assistant could be paid by the blind employee or any nonprofit organization.

The Commission favors enactment of this bill.

We believe enactment of this legislation should increase employment opportunities for the blind. It should, in turn, be of benefit to the Government by enabling it to use the services of personnel who could not otherwise be employed. At the same time, by making the reading assistants subject to appointment at the discretion of the department or agency head, and by limiting the source of their compensation to the blind employee or a nonprofit organization, it should protect the Government from possible abuses. The reading assistant would be subject to Government control and supervision, and would be subject to any necessary security clearances.

It should be recognized, however, that employment of reading assistants under this proposed authority could give rise to some potentially troublesome problems. A complex relationship is established among the agency, the blind employee, the reading assistant, and the source of the reading assistant's pay. Question may arise as to what extent the agency is obliged to replace a reading assistant who has left (voluntarily or at the agency's request). If a reading assistant is acceptable to the blind employee but not to the agency, and another is not available, can the blind employee be removed for inability to perform? If a reading assistant is acceptable to the agency, but not to the blind employee, must the reading assistant be discharged by the agency? The possibility of problems such as these must, perhaps, be accepted in order to obtain the advantages offered by the bill.

While subsection (a) of the bill would except reading assistants from the Civil Service Act and the Classification Act, it would not necessarily exclude them from coverage for certain purposes under the Veterans' Preference Act, the Performance Rating Act of 1950, or other laws applying to Federal employees. If, for example, a reading assistant were given a permanent appointment without compensation, he would have appeal rights under section 14 of the Veterans' Preference Act.

The reading assistant appointed under this proposed authority would apparently meet the usual tests of Federal employment. He would be:

- (1) engaged in the performance of Federal functions under authority of an act of Congress or an Executive order;
- (2) appointed or employed by a Federal officer in his official capacity as such; and
- (3) under the supervision and direction of a Federal officer.

Presuming his appointment paper would carry the legend "without compensation," this circumstance would exclude him from current retirement, life insurance, and health benefits coverage. If the reading assistant serves on a full-time or substantially full-time basis, this service will become creditable for retirement purposes if he later becomes eligible for retirement coverage in a salaried position.

You requested that in addition to making the usual kind of report on the bill, we furnish certain information about the present employment of readers.

We have no information as to the number of readers for the blind now employed by the Government. Actually, we have no data on the number of blind persons now occupying Federal positions. We believe that a considerable number of readers would be appointed under this bill but we cannot hazard a guess as to the number.

Secretaries of blind employees at the higher grades frequently serve as readers. Occasionally, employees from stenographic pools serve as readers, from time to time, for blind employees at lower grades. We do not know how many employees there are serving as readers in this manner.

It would appear that the legislation would result in only minor additional cost to the Government. The salaries of the readers are not to be paid by the employing departments. Some minor additional administrative expenses can be expected.

The Bureau of the Budget advises that from the standpoint of the administration's program there is no objection to the submission of this report.

By direction of the Commission:

Sincerely yours,

JOHN W. MACY, Jr., *Chairman.*

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT,
BUREAU OF THE BUDGET,
Washington, D.C., May 16, 1962.

HON. TOM MURRAY,
*Chairman, Committee on Post Office and Civil Service,
House of Representatives, Washington, D.C.*

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Reference is made to the committee's request for the views of the Bureau of the Budget respecting H.R. 11523, a bill "To authorize the employment without compensation from the Government of readers for blind Government employees, and for other purposes."

The bill would authorize employment, without compensation by the Government, of readers for blind employees, such readers to be paid out of personal funds of the blind employee or by any nonprofit organization.

In a report which the Chairman of the Civil Service Commission is submitting to your committee on this bill, favoring its enactment, he states that there is no available information on the number of blind persons occupying Federal positions or on the number of readers to the blind now employed by the Government. The Chairman also notes that employment of reading assistants under the bill can result in complex problems of relationship as among the employing agency, the blind employee, and the reading assistant.

Inasmuch as there is no previous experience in Federal service with the type of employment here proposed, the Bureau of the Budget regards the proposal as somewhat experimental, and assumes that resulting experience would be evaluated after passage of reasonable time following enactment.

There would be no objection from the standpoint of the administration's program to enactment of the subject bill.

Sincerely yours,

PHILLIP S. HUGHES,
Assistant Director for Legislative Reference.

COMPTROLLER GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES,
Washington, May 14, 1962.

HON. TOM MURRAY,
*Chairman, Committee on Post Office and Civil Service,
House of Representatives.*

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Your letter of May 3, 1962, acknowledged May 7, requests our report upon H.R. 11523 which would authorize the employment on a without-compensation basis of reading assistants for blind employees of the Government. Also, the bill would authorize reading assistants to receive compensation for their services from the blind employee himself or any nonprofit organization as defined in the bill.

We have no information concerning the extent of the need for enactment of the bill but there is one feature of the bill which might impose a burden on the Government that may not be intended. For instance, a blind employee might be employed with the understanding he is to provide a reader. After the blind employee acquires civil service status his reader may resign. The Government then might be required to provide a reading assistant. That situation could be avoided if the bill were to provide that the employment of a blind employee may be made contingent upon his providing a competent reading assistant.

Otherwise, the bill appears adequate to accomplish its intended purpose.

Sincerely yours,

FRANK H. WEITZEL,
Deputy Comptroller General of the United States.

Mr. ADDABBO. Before proceeding with the hearing, I do want to beg the indulgence of the members of the subcommittee and our witnesses for scheduling this hearing at such an unusually early hour. I hasten to assure my colleagues that I will be the first to disclaim this action as any precedent for the future. Our full committee is holding hearings three mornings each week at 10 o'clock on salary legislation and if we are to secure action on some of the bills pending in subcommittees, it becomes necessary to schedule hearings at times such as this that are not altogether convenient.

Since we must vacate the hearing room this morning at 10 o'clock, at which time the full committee will meet and this morning's witnesses will be assembling, I ask the further indulgence of our witnesses to keep their testimony as brief as possible.

I am anxious that we be given an opportunity to hear all the witnesses and then convene into executive session before the beginning of the full committee hearing.

I apologize for several of our members not being here but they have other commitments and should join us shortly.

Our first witness will be the distinguished gentleman from Pennsylvania, the ranking minority member, Mr. Corbett, who sponsored H.R. 11523.

Mr. CORBETT. Mr. Chairman, even if our other colleagues were here, I think it is true that the witnesses honoring this committee with their presence this morning are much more distinguished than our absent colleagues or those of us who are present.

I would join with you in the fact that having a meeting this early in the morning is certainly a bit inconvenient for a great many people but I have been assured by Mr. Udall that he will be here and Mr. Broyhill will be here. I have not talked to Mr. Daniels.

The purposes of this bill are quite simple. It authorizes the head of each department of the Government to employ, without regard to the civil service laws and the Classification Act of 1949, a reading assistant or assistants for any blind employee of such department who will serve without compensation from the Government.

Second, it will make it possible for these reading assistants to be paid by the blind employee or by any nonprofit organization.

This latter is accomplished by exempting the reading assistants from certain provisions of the Criminal Code which prohibits any Federal employee from receiving a salary from a non-Government source and which further prohibits any person, corporation, or association from contributing to, or supplementing the salary of a Federal employee.

The bill makes the readers Government employees so they will be subject to Government control and supervision and subject to any necessary security clearances.

The purpose of the legislation is to expand employment opportunities with the Federal Government for qualified blind persons. In effect, it will, for employment purposes with our Government, remove the obstacle or handicap of blindness for any blind person who is otherwise found qualified.

The benefits of the legislation will be twofold; fruitful careers in Federal service will become available and attractive to countless blind persons who cannot now qualify because of reading requirements, and our Government, always hard pressed to recruit qualified personnel, will be able to attract talented people, comprising almost every conceivable type of professional and technical skill.

The legislation, of course, should entail no cost at all to the Government.

Mr. Chairman, by favorably considering this bill we have an excellent opportunity here to put the Federal Government into the lead in what I consider a most important and most enlightened personnel action that could encourage local and State governments and private industry to follow.

Thank you.

Mr. ADDABBO. I wish to compliment you, Mr. Corbett, on the foresight in introducing this legislation.

I say that this legislation is just as far reaching as our second orbital flight which, so far, according to all reports, is favorable. We do now have Mr. Carpenter in orbit.

Our first witness is Maj. Gen. Melvin J. Maas, who certainly needs no introduction here in Congress. He served in the House of Representatives for 16 years and has a distinguished record of service here surpassed only by his service to the country in the two World Wars. He is now serving his country again as Chairman of the President's Committee on Employment of the Physically Handicapped.

We deeply appreciate your being with us this morning, General Maas, and, recognizing the fact that you have other commitments and you must leave early, the subcommittee is pleased to call on you now.

STATEMENT OF MAJ. GEN. MELVIN J. MAAS, CHAIRMAN, PRESIDENT'S COMMITTEE ON EMPLOYMENT OF THE PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED, ACCOMPANIED BY K. VERNON BANTA, DEPUTY EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

Mr. MAAS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I shall be very brief.

Mr. Corbett stated the case so completely it takes very little more. I just want to explain the interest of the President's Committee.

We are, of course, interested in employment for all the handicapped. Our Government does more for the blind than they do for any other minority group in this country, and certainly than for any other handicapped group, except for helping them get jobs.

That is the one thing they want above all else. Training and prosthetic devices are marvelous and we have no complaints. The President's Committee is interested because our main job is to sell industry and private business but we run into a stone wall of business and other

interests saying, "Why should we hire the blind? The Government will not do it."

Unless the Government sets a pattern by opening the way, we are meeting unreasonable resistance in private industry. The Civil Service Commission has cooperated 1,000 percent and they have opened up their examinations so that the blind can take almost any examination now. We have many young men under vocational training, many of them veterans, who have gotten an education. They are lawyers and they have become highly skilled technicians as well, such as operators of IBM machines and other data processing machines. Some are professional men but they simply cannot get a break in the Government because they have to start at a grade that is too low for them to be furnished with a secretary and this would correct that situation. It would permit these highly qualified selective young men and women to enter the Government without cost to the Government for reader service until such time as they became eligible in the normal course of promotion to where they would have a secretary or share a secretary who could do the essential reading.

Their brains are not affected, Mr. Chairman. They are unusually keen and intelligent people. The very fact that they are blind and they have overcome the handicap in going to college shows that. They have to do this under great difficulty and our experience in a few cases shows where they have been able to get into the Federal Government they have been outstanding.

I just want to close with one illustration.

We had a highly qualified, educated young man with post-graduate training who could not get a professional job in the Government. He finally got a job in the Veterans' Administration as a dictaphone transcriber. Of course, that was way below his qualifications and his ability but later, through tremendous effort, he was transferred to another agency where he is doing script work and is making such an outstanding success that his present Government chief wrote to the head of the Veterans' Administration thanking him for having made him available to them and having put them in touch with him.

This is typical of the few who have made the break, but if you will open up the opportunities without cost to the Government to the qualified blind, we can, for every one you hire, in the President's Committee open up opportunities for hundreds of qualified blind in private industry and in business.

Mr. Chairman, I have filed a report with the statement and I think that is all I wish to say.

Mr. ADDABBO. Thank you very much, Mr. Maas, for giving us your time.

Mr. CORBETT. Mr. Chairman, I would like to say a word.

I first met Mr. Maas when I came to Congress in 1939, if you remember, Mel?

Mr. MAAS. I remember, Bob.

Mr. CORBETT. I would like the record to show that in all the years I have known him, I have never known him not to be dedicated to the service of his fellowman.

Mel, we certainly hope for you a long and useful life.

Mr. MAAS. Thank you, Bob. I appreciate that.

Mr. ADDABBO. Mr. Daniels, do you have any questions?

Mr. DANIELS. No questions.

Mr. ADDABBO. Thank you very much, Mr. Maas.

Mr. MAAS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. ADDABBO. Our next witness is the Honorable John W. Macy, Jr., Chairman, U.S. Civil Service Commission, accompanied by Dr. Melvin T. Johnson, Deputy Medical Director.

STATEMENT OF HON. JOHN W. MACY, JR., CHAIRMAN, U.S. CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION, ACCOMPANIED BY DR. MELVIN T. JOHNSON, DEPUTY MEDICAL DIRECTOR

Mr. MACY. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate this opportunity to appear before you and your colleagues to support the enactment of H.R. 11523 introduced, as you have indicated, by the distinguished ranking minority member of the committee committee, Mr. Corbett.

This bill which would authorize the departments and agencies to employ reading assistants for blind employees would be enabling legislation to facilitate significantly the placing of well-qualified blind eligibles now on the civil service list.

For many years the Commission has had a program directed at encouraging agencies to hire persons with serious physical handicaps where their abilities can be used. Each year several thousand persons with serious, permanent physical handicaps take their places in the Government's career civil service through the Commission's selective placement program.

In its role as a central personnel agency, the Commission has a duty to see that agencies hire the best qualified people in an equitable manner and without discrimination. It provides the disabled equal opportunity for Federal employment but cannot provide them special preference over other applicants. Not only must the physically handicapped be qualified for the particular jobs; they must also compete with nondisabled applicants.

The Commission ascertains the physical demands of Federal jobs and what people with physical handicaps can and cannot do. This information is made available to Government agencies through publication of results of job analyses. The agencies and not the Commission have the responsibility of hiring people who will fit into their organizations.

We try to see that the handicapped are placed in positions where they can serve efficiently and without undue hazard to themselves or others, and to see that physical conditions are not used as the basis of unfair discrimination in connection with any phase of Federal employment under our jurisdiction.

The Federal Government has a system of coordinators for employment of the handicapped of which it can be proud. This system which is now in its sixth year provides the handicapped with advocates at the departmental and field installation level. It removes the danger that consideration of the handicapped may be "everybody's business and nobody's business."

Blindness is one of the serious handicaps with which we have been concerned. From time to time it has been suggested that the Commission, by policy statement or regulation, authorize agencies to permit blind employees to secure needed assistance without cost to the employing agency. It was proposed that such assistance

could be financed by the blind employee himself, by a voluntary agency, or, for periods of job adjustments when the employee needs financial help, by State vocational rehabilitation agencies.

The Commission was unable to comply with this suggestion because of section 665(b) of title 31 of the United States Code, which forbids officers and employees of the Government to accept voluntary services for the Government, or to employ personal services in excess of that authorized by law, except in cases of emergency involving the safety of human life or the protection of property.

In addition, section 1914 of title 18 of the United States Code provides that no Government employee shall receive any salary in connection with his services as such employee—

from any source other than the Government of the United States, except as may be contributed out of the treasury of any State, county or municipality; * * *

The section penalizes any individual or private organization which attempts to pay a Federal employee for such work.

The reader in reading to a blind employee would be doing part of the work of the office, so he would be performing personal services for the Government. The Comptroller General has held that purely personal services must be performed by regular employees of the Government subject to Government control and supervision.

It follows that under existing law, the reader would have to be a Government employee but could not be paid either by the blind employee or some third party. Neither could a department accept the services of a reader who simply presents himself and volunteers to do the reading without compensation.

Therefore, if the Government is to employ readers who are to be paid by the blind employee or by a third party, legislation is required.

H.R. 11523 will enable departments and agencies to employ readers without compensation from the department or agency. It will permit the reader to receive, and the blind employee or a nonprofit organization to provide, compensation for his services.

An alternate approach would have been to authorize the blind employee himself to employ a reader. This is perhaps less desirable, however, because the employing department would have less control over the reader. By making the reader an employee of the Department he is subject to Government control and supervision, and would be subject to any necessary security clearances.

We were asked by your committee to furnish information on the number of reading assistants currently employed by the Government. We have no information on this. As a matter of fact, we do not know how many blind persons there are occupying Federal positions. Our new statistics program should make some data on employment of the blind available in the future.

I might add that in the new statistics program to go into effect July 1, there will be an item that identifies the physically handicapped and then a coded breakdown by 10 numbers which will specify the types of handicap. So the type of information you seek will be available in the future.

Secretaries to blind employees at the higher grades frequently serve as readers. Occasionally, we understand, employees from stenographic pools serve as readers, from time to time, for blind employees at lower grades. We do not, however, know the number of employees who serve as readers in this way.

We believe that this legislation should be enacted because it will increase employment opportunities for the blind. It should at the same time enable the Government to make use of the services of people who could otherwise not be employed.

It must be recognized, though, that this bill merely eliminates certain legal obstacles to the employment of reading assistants in this manner. Only hard work by all concerned can overcome the practical problems which will be encountered. Employment of a blind person who is dependent on the services of a reader introduces problems for the employing department, not encountered when it employs a sighted person for the same job. Accomplishment of the assigned work is dependent upon the presence and performance of not one person but two. When appointing a blind person with the understanding that he will need assistance from a reader, departments will have to give the most careful attention not only to the placement of the blind person but also to the selection and appointment of a reading assistant.

As we mentioned in our report to the committee on this bill—and I might say you wish to incorporate that report dated May 16 in the record—the employment of reading assistants under this proposed authority could give rise to some troublesome problems. What happens to the blind employee if a reading assistant is dismissed by the agency and another one cannot be found? What happens if a reading assistant who is acceptable to the agency is unacceptable to the blind employee?

There are other questions which may arise. The reading assistant while excluded from the Civil Service Act and the Classification Act may well be subject to other laws applying to Federal employees.

If, for example, a reading assistant were given a permanent appointment without compensation, he would have appeal rights to the Civil Service Commission under section 14 of the Veterans' Preference Act in case his agency removed him or took other adverse action against him.

If the reading assistant's appointment paper carries the legend "without compensation" he will be excluded from current retirement, life insurance, and health benefits coverage. If, however, he serves on a full-time or substantially full-time basis, this service will become creditable for retirement purposes if he later becomes eligible for retirement coverage in a salaried position.

I need to make two points clear: We favor enactment of this legislation because it removes legal obstacles to employment of readers for the blind, but the actual employment of readers in this manner will not be without its problems.

Much of the success of any operations under this bill will be dependent upon the care and wisdom used in placing the blind employees. The Federal Government's outstanding success in employing handicapped personnel in recent years encourages me to expect that a good job will be done. The Commission stands ready to lend assistance to departments and agencies, within the limits of its capabilities.

I will be happy to answer any questions that you and your colleagues may have.

Mr. ADDABBO. Thank you very much, Mr. Macy, for your statement and time.

Mr. Corbett?

Mr. CORBETT. Mr. Chairman, I would like to say to Mr. Macy that his taking the time and trouble to come here this morning is very much appreciated because when we come to the time of trying to get this bill finally enacted, I think the fact that he appeared here will be one of our chief arguments for it.

I think you, therefore, have made a very real contribution and we appreciate it.

Regarding one of the points you raised, we have a report here from the Budget Department which states:

* * * Inasmuch as there is no previous experience in Federal service with the type of employment here proposed, the Bureau of the Budget regards the proposal as somewhat experimental and assumes that resulting experience would be evaluated after the passage of reasonable time following the enactment.

Mr. Chairman, just to keep the record straight, I would like to move that the report of the Civil Service Commission be incorporated at this point in the record along with the budget statement.

Mr. ADDABBO. Those reports have been inserted in the record.

Mr. DANIELS. Mr. Macy, you say there are no statistics on the number of blind employees in the Government?

Mr. MACY. No, sir, we do not have census information that would give us that knowledge. We hope that when we have this new statistical program, we will be able to give a precise figure.

Mr. DANIELS. Do you have any knowledge as to what departments they are employed in at the present time?

Mr. MACY. We know that the principal employments are in the departments where there is a large number of manual jobs. These have been the types of occupations where most effective placements have been made, and this means the departments of the military services, Army, Navy, and Air Force. They have been utilized in the Veterans' Administration to some extent and in the Post Office.

Mr. DANIELS. In what capacities have they been employed in the Post Office?

Mr. MACY. They have been used in some of the clerical positions in the Post Office.

Mr. DANIELS. Mailmen and sorting mail?

Mr. MACY. Clerical functions—handling of office operations.

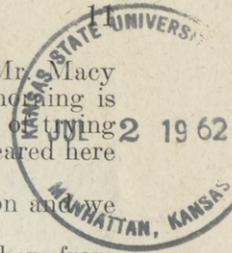
Mr. DANIELS. What would be the nature of the manual jobs in the armed services?

Mr. MACY. In the armed services it would be inspection jobs and in manufacturing establishments. I recall very distinctly going through the naval ordnance plant outside of Chicago a number of years ago and seeing the blind inspectors inspecting ball bearings and other objects coming through using set gages.

Mr. DANIELS. Quite interesting.

Mr. MACY. We have made significant progress and I do not want to leave the impression that this is a field where we are just initiating work. Progress has been made but we feel we can make much more progress with this type of assistance, particularly for those blind persons who have completed higher education and, therefore, are eligible for positions that require reading as a major function.

General Maas mentioned the young man who went from the Veterans' Administration to USIA. I recall that case very well myself. This was a chap who was blinded at Bastogne and came back and completed his undergraduate education at George Washington and then went on to Harvard Law School and completed law school.



He then took the civil service Federal entrance examination and passed as a blind person with a very high score.

Then the problem was what career entry position with that type of education could he move into without having reader assistance? Eventual placement was made where he was able to develop scripts for the Voice of America by utilizing transcribing equipment. He was able to listen to other broadcasts recorded on monitoring equipment and from that developed his own script. This was a very unusual placement.

Dr. Johnson has just given me some statistics that show there were 19 blind eligibles on the Federal service entrance examination last year. They had completed their college education. We were unable to place them because in virtually every instance it would require the assistance of readers.

Mr. DANIELS. Do you know if there is anything in the law of the Federal Government which would prohibit the employment of blind persons?

Mr. MACY. No, sir.

Mr. DANIELS. No restrictions under civil service rules and regulations?

Mr. MACY. No, sir. In fact, under the Civil Service Act, we endeavor to administer an examining system open to all who are qualified regardless of race, color, creed, handicap, or anything else.

Mr. DANIELS. Have you given any consideration to what this program of employed readers will cost the Government?

Mr. MACY. It would cost the Government no direct expense at all because under this legislation the readers would be employed without Federal compensation. They would be paid by the blind person himself, by a charitable organization, or by a State vocational agency. The cost to the Government should be minimal only in the sense of providing office space for the individual.

Mr. DANIELS. Thank you.

Mr. ADDABBO. Thank you, Mr. Macy.

Mr. MACY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Once again, I hope that the committee will give this legislation favorable consideration.

Mr. ADDABBO. Thank you very much, Mr. Macy.

Our next witness is Mr. Irvin P. Schloss, legislative analyst, American Foundation for the Blind, Inc., and also representing the American Association of Instructors of the Blind and American Association of Workers for the Blind.

**STATEMENT OF IRVIN P. SCHLOSS, LEGISLATIVE ANALYST,
AMERICAN FOUNDATION FOR THE BLIND, INC., AND ALSO
REPRESENTING THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF INSTRUCTORS
OF THE BLIND AND AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF WORKERS
FOR THE BLIND**

Mr. SCHLOSS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I have submitted a written statement for the record. In order to conserve the time of the committee, I will just point to the highlights, some of which may not have been covered by previous witnesses.

The principal purpose of the legislation is to permit the law and regulations and procedures to be changed in such a way so that those

highly qualified blind persons who have taken and passed civil service examinations can enter the classified service at the lower professional grades, where they do not ordinarily get clerical or secretarial help.

At present, there are many blind persons employed in the Government. "Many" is perhaps not a good word, but there are certainly blind persons employed by the Federal Government throughout the country as well as by the government of the District of Columbia.

They are employed in various types of occupations. There are highly skilled mechanical workers among them. There are highly skilled clerical workers, such as medical dictation transcribers in hospitals as well as hearing reporters.

Among the administrative and professional occupations held by blind persons now in the Federal Government, there are attorneys, writers, rehabilitation specialists, social workers, psychologists, and even computer programmers.

For example, there is a budget analyst who has been doing a very effective job for many years with the Bureau of the Budget, who is totally blind.

These individuals have all demonstrated they are capable, and they were hired on the basis of their ability in the first place. They have been given the opportunity to show that they could be an asset to the Government as employees.

The principal difficulty, as I said earlier, has been in allowing those who have just come out of college and have entered Government service at grades 5, 7, and perhaps 9, to get reading assistance that they would need in the event their positions required some reading of essential materials.

I might add, too, that through the use of modern electronic equipment, such as tape recorders and dictation machines, a blind person can certainly utilize the time of a reading assistant very efficiently and economically and make the best use of his own time.

In addition, these blind individuals would be able to type and certainly would use Braille.

I would like to suggest that the committee consider a possible amendment to the bill itself, or some wording for inclusion in the report as follows:

Nothing in this act is intended to preclude the assignment of regular clerical or secretarial assistance to blind employees when such assistance would ordinarily be provided to employees in such positions, or when, in the judgment of the head of each department, the furnishing of such assistance would be desirable.

Some of the individuals I talked about earlier, who are presently employed in professional positions in the Government, were actually assigned clerical or secretarial assistance on a full- or part-time basis when they entered Government service and they certainly demonstrated the value of this. It would be advisable, we feel, to make clear that the intent of H.R. 11523 is not to deprive those blind employees in the higher grades of secretarial service that their positions entitle them to, but rather to make it possible for those entering Government service at the lower grades to utilize reading assistants.

In some instances, certainly those at the higher grades, may make very good use of this to actually make them even more desirable, more highly valued Government employees in terms of increasing their effectiveness.

There is another important aspect of this legislation which I think should be considered if it is enacted into law. It could very well serve as the model for State and local governments to use in eliminating similar barriers to employment in government service at those levels.

There is no question but that there would be considerable opportunities for well-qualified blind persons at State and local government service levels.

I included in my written statement a specific example we learned about earlier this year of a highly qualified individual who happened to be blind but who was trying to get a job with the Federal Government. To borrow a phrase from today's space launching, everything was "Go" but the law.

The Veterans' Administration was interested in employing this individual as a grade 7 claims adjudicator, and they would have permitted him to hire his own reading assistant. Unfortunately, it was found that the law made this impossible; and the individual did not get that job as a result.

In conclusion, I would like to urge the committee to take favorable action on this legislation. It is the culmination of a very thorough effort to achieve the same results administratively, and it was found it had to be done by legislative action of the Congress.

Thank you.

MR. ADDABBO. Thank you very much, Mr. Schloss.

Without objection, your prepared statement will be made a part of the record.

(The statement follows:)

PREPARED STATEMENT OF IRVIN P. SCHLOSS, LEGISLATIVE ANALYST, AMERICAN FOUNDATION FOR THE BLIND

Mr. Chairman and members of the subcommittee, I am pleased to have this opportunity to present the views of the American Foundation for the Blind on H.R. 11523. The American Foundation for the Blind is the national voluntary research and consultant agency in the field of services to blind persons.

I have also been asked by the American Association of Instructors of the Blind and the American Association of Workers for the Blind to indicate that I am also speaking on their behalf in urging your favorable consideration of this bill. Both organizations are filing written statements for inclusion in the record of these hearings.

H.R. 11523 has a simple and worthy purpose. It will provide the authority under which qualified blind persons who have taken and passed appropriate civil service examinations will be permitted to obtain the services of reading assistants without cost to the Government. Thus, this bill will open up additional employment opportunities for qualified blind persons in agencies of the Federal Government and the District of Columbia.

At present, there are highly qualified blind individuals employed in a wide variety of positions in agencies of the Federal Government throughout the country as well as in agencies of the government of the District of Columbia. Some are skilled mechanics and "blue collar" workers of various types. Some are clerical workers, such as medical dictation transcribers in hospitals and hearing reporters. Others are employed in administrative and professional positions as attorneys, writers, social workers, psychologists, rehabilitation specialists, and computer programmers.

All of these individuals were hired because of their ability, because they have skills needed by the agencies which employ them. They were given the chance to demonstrate their value as Government employees, and they have proved that they are an asset to their agencies. Some have even won special citations for meritorious service or for suggesting improved procedures which have saved the Government money.

However, it is very difficult for a qualified blind person to obtain an appointment in the lower professional grades of the classified service, where clerical or secretarial assistance is not usually provided. H.R. 11523 would remove this bar to the employment of well-qualified blind individuals by permitting the head of an agency of the Government to hire as employees without compensation from the Government reading assistants for blind employees of that agency.

The bill would permit such reading assistants to be paid by the blind employee or by a nonprofit voluntary agency if the reading assistants were not in a position to serve on a voluntary basis. Public agencies, such as the State vocational rehabilitation agencies, would be able to pay the cost of a reading assistant for a blind person for a stated period of time as part of the individual's rehabilitation program. In any case, reading assistants would be subject to the rules and regulations of the agency governing all employees.

At this point, we would like to suggest the desirability of including in the bill itself, or in the report, a sentence similar to the following:

"Nothing in this act is intended to preclude the assignment of clerical or secretarial assistance to a blind employee, when such assistance would ordinarily be provided to employees in such positions, or when, in the judgment of the head of each Department, the furnishing of such assistance would be desirable."

The inclusion of such wording would serve to make it clear that the intent of H.R. 11523 is to remove a barrier to the employment of qualified blind persons at the lower professional grades, where secretarial assistance is not ordinarily provided and not to deprive blind employees in the higher grades of secretarial assistance to which their positions entitle them. Also, in some agencies, blind employees hired at the lower grades have been assigned regular secretarial assistance on a full-time or part-time basis; and some agency heads may prefer to continue doing this.

I should like to point out that the introduction of H.R. 11523 by the Honorable Robert Corbett, a distinguished member of this committee, is the culmination of approximately 2 years of thorough exploration by the President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped, the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, the Civil Service Commission, and the American Foundation for the Blind of administrative means of achieving the objective of the bill. It was found that legislation by the Congress would be required.

An instance of how this bill would have helped a blind person obtain a job for which he was qualified if it had been law at that time came to our attention early this year. The Veterans' Administration was prepared to hire an attorney who is blind for a GS-7 position as a claims adjudicator. The VA had agreed to allow this individual to furnish his own reading assistant when the agency's personnel officials discovered that this was not legally possible. Here we had a situation where the law itself proved to be the only obstacle to the employment of a qualified blind person by a Federal agency which wanted to hire him.

If H.R. 11523 is enacted into law, this type of situation will not be able to occur, and we believe that other agencies of the Federal Government and the District of Columbia will be as interested in utilizing the skills of qualified persons who happen to be blind, as was the Veterans' Administration. Furthermore, we believe that H.R. 11523 will serve as a model for State and local governments to use in eliminating a barrier to the employment of blind persons in government service.

We sincerely hope that this committee will take favorable action on H.R. 11523.

Mr. ADDABBO. I have just one question.

Mr. SCHLOSS. Surely.

Mr. ADDABBO. Has this principle embodied in the legislation we are considering this morning been used, to your knowledge, in private industry at all?

Mr. SCHLOSS. I believe it has in private industry, yes.

It is not unusual for a blind person hired by private corporations, if he has the skills considered highly desirable by that corporation, for the organization to assign him a full-time secretary. He would also serve as a reader.

Mr. ADDABBO. Thank you.

Mr. Corbett?

Mr. SCHLOSS. It is a question of ability and desirability of the individual's employer.

Mr. CORBETT. Mr. Schloss, I am considering the amendment you have suggested. I do not believe that it is absolutely necessary and vital because the proposed legislation would not affect the current situation adversely in any way. However, I believe inclusion of the amendment at the proper place certainly could not do any damage, and it would be a safeguard and a statement of policy so I can assure the gentleman I will, at the right time, suggest the inclusion of his amendment.

Mr. SCHLOSS. Thank you, sir.

Mr. ADDABBO. Mr. Daniels?

Mr. DANIELS. No questions.

Mr. ADDABBO. Thank you very much, Mr. Schloss.

Mr. SCHLOSS. Thank you.

Mr. ADDABBO. The subcommittee has received the following statement which will be inserted at this point in the record.

(The statement referred to follows:)

STATEMENT OF GEORGE E. KEANE, CHAIRMAN, LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE, AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF WORKERS FOR THE BLIND

Chairman Addabbo and members of the subcommittee, it is privilege to present this statement to this distinguished committee for the American Association of Workers for the Blind, of which I have the honor to serve as chairman of its legislative committee.

H.R. 11523 which amends the Civil Service Act to make it possible for blind Government employees to have the essential reading service they need to carry forward their work by making it lawful for such persons to be considered as employees without pay is a very thoughtful and humane proposal. Very often the need for reading service is the only barrier to brilliant and successful employment of a blind person who, except for blindness, may be as competent as anyone who could be secured to fill the position.

We heartily endorse and have asked Mr. Irvin P. Schloss, legislative analyst for the American Foundation for the Blind, to allow us to join him in his presentation to you on Thursday, May 24, 1962. We concur wholeheartedly in everything he is saying to you. May we urge the subcommittee to report favorably to the Committee on Post Office and Civil Service of the House on this amendment.

Again, thank you for permitting me to present this statement to you and may I ask that it become a part of the record.

Mr. ADDABBO. Our next witness is Mr. George M. Gillispie, executive director, Blinded Veterans Association.

STATEMENT OF GEORGE M. GILLISPIE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, BLINDED VETERANS ASSOCIATION

Mr. GILLISPIE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and members of the committee.

I have filed a statement which I would like to have made a part of the record.

Mr. ADDABBO. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(The statement follows:)

PREPARED STATEMENT OF GEORGE M. GILLISPIE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, BLINDED VETERANS ASSOCIATION

Mr. Chairman and members of the subcommittee, in support of H.R. 11523 "To authorize the employment without compensation from the Government of readers for blind Government employees, and for other purposes," the Blinded Veterans Association strongly urges the enactment of this bill.

It has always been the policy of the Government of the United States of America to employ, insofar as is practicable and feasible, the handicapped. There are many blinded persons today who had outstanding careers prior to the onset of blindness. The passing of this bill will allow those blinded persons to be gainfully employed again and of service to their country. There are many blinded persons who, because of their inability to read, have been unable to secure positions in keeping with their talents. The provision of a reader will overcome this obstacle.

This legislation is outstanding in that it will not cost the Government anything. On the contrary, it will bring to the Government, dedicated, conscientious, and capable employees. May I remind members of the committee at this point that absenteeism and injuries on the job, in the case of blind employees, have been in the past, and now are, comparatively negligible.

We therefore request that this bill receive favorable consideration by the committee.

Mr. GILLISPIE. I would like to make a few remarks, possibly along the line of the points that have not been discussed here today.

I would like to begin by saying that in Government employment in the mechanical skills, we have moved pretty far along and I will use a couple of examples.

At Quanta Point Air Station, we have a machinist and at Point Mugu, we have a carpenter. We have a telephone repairman, electrician, and an auto mechanic and electrician over in the department of electronics and also at Point Mugu we have a boy who is a University of Washington graduate, school of journalism, and he is a dispatcher. Here is a man working in the Government with a lot of knowledge, good background, and he has not been able to move up because he does not have reader service. He is at Point Mugu and most of these stations publish a house organ.

This boy could move up if he had that reader help. We have the skills and we are able to move forward in the mechanical end but, with the passage of this bill, I am sure some of these men with fine backgrounds will be able to move up and do the work which they are skilled to do.

Other than that, gentlemen, I think that what has been said here today has been very well covered and I do not think there is any use of my going over it again.

I want to thank you and if I can answer any questions I will be glad to do so.

Mr. ADDABBO. Thank you very much, Mr. Gillispie, for your time. Mr. Corbett?

Mr. CORBETT. Mr. Chairman, I do not have any questions but I do want to say I appreciate the gentleman's presence and his testimony.

Mr. ADDABBO. Mr. Udall?

Mr. UDALL. No questions.

Mr. ADDABBO. Mr. Daniels?

Mr. DANIELS. Just one thought comes to my mind, whether or not it would be necessary to hire a reader for each employee the Government might employ?

Mr. GILLISPIE. I think not. I think we will find it is just like we people here in jobs outside the Government. A lot of the work we organize in such a way we use a very minimum amount of a reader's time and service. I think, with a lot of these people in a lot of these jobs, it will be found that once the man is in the job that this reading service is not going to be the big thing maybe a lot of people think it is, because we have been able to handle these jobs that are responsible and

do the work. Everyone talks about a sixth sense. There is no such thing as the sixth sense. You just reorganize the other senses you have and when we go into that and through training and through college, we have managed all of this college material and were able to pass these examinations, and so forth, and I think we will find the same thing here when we get men in these fields.

In fact, I think it is already demonstrated in the case of the gentleman Mr. Schloss spoke of in the Bureau of the Budget. I think his reading time is very minimal and many others have made the grade.

I think we will find this all along the line.

Mr. DANIELS. Thank you.

Mr. ADDABBO. Thank you very much, Mr. Gillispie.

Mr. GILLISPIE. Thank you, gentlemen.

Mr. ADDABBO. Our next witness is Mr. John F. Nagle, chief, Washington office, National Federation of the Blind.

STATEMENT OF JOHN F. NAGLE, CHIEF, WASHINGTON OFFICE, NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND

Mr. NAGLE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman and members of the subcommittee, my name is John F. Nagle. I am the chief of the Washington office of the National Federation of the Blind. My address is 1908 Q Street NW., Washington 9, D.C.

The National Federation of the Blind endorses and vigorously supports H.R. 11523.

We urge the committee to act upon this bill favorably and speedily that it may become law without needless delay.

Since the founding of our organization in 1940, we, blind men and women, members of the National Federation, have worked toward improving the employment opportunities of all blind persons in America.

We have worked to break down the barriers which deny them such opportunities—denied them, not because they were unqualified or lacked the talents and skills required, but because they were blind; denied them, not because they were unable to do the requisite work as well or better than those with sight, but denied them because they were blind.

Believing that Government service could and should serve as a proving ground for demonstrating the capacities and capabilities of blind workers, we have sought to remove obstacles which barred qualified blind persons from obtaining positions in Federal civil service.

Just such an obstacle will be removed by the adoption of H.R. 11523.

The impediments to employment which this bill seeks to remove are neither remote nor imaginary.

Let me give you an example of why this legislative proposal should be enacted into law:

Recently, I became acquainted with a lawyer from Philadelphia. He is blind. He came to Washington to secure employment with the Government.

Finally, after much seeking and many disappointments, he notified me that he had a job—or rather, he thought he almost had a job. He was to work as a claims adjuster for a Government agency. His work would require that he examine printed records, and secretarial

assistance paid by the employing agency would not be available to him. At first, this seemed to present no problem—he had been advised he might have volunteers read the print material on tapes for his use.

Later, my friend informed me that this simple solution, which would have cost the Government nothing, was considered to be a violation of Federal law—so, of course, he didn't get the job.

Had H.R. 11523 been law at the time, he would be gainfully and successfully employed today.

However, although we are in full support of H.R. 11523, we believe that if it becomes law in its present form, blind employees of Government, entitled to secretarial assistance at Government expense by reason of the work they are doing, might be denied such secretarial help and be required to furnish it at their own expense.

We believe that H.R. 11523 should be amended to prevent such a possibility from occurring.

We also believe that the committee report issued with reference to H.R. 11523 should spell out in clear and definite language that H.R. 11523 is intended to permit a blind Government employee to obtain sighted help with his work without cost to the Government, but only when such help would not be rightfully his because of the work he is doing or the position he occupies in departmental structure.

We recommend the following statement and urge its acceptance as an amendment to the bill and as an indication of the kind of language which should appear in the committee report:

Nothing in this Act is intended to preclude the assignment of clerical or secretarial assistance to a blind employee, when such assistance would ordinarily be provided to employees in such positions, or when, in the judgment of the head of each department, the furnishing of such assistance would be desirable.

We request that this safeguard be included in both the bill and the committee report, so that, when H.R. 11523 becomes law, all blind persons wishing to work in Government service will be benefited by it—to be sure that none is injured by it.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, the transformation of H.R. 11523 from legislative proposal into Federal law would serve a double purpose, would be doubly beneficial—not only would it enhance the employment opportunities of qualified blind persons in Government service, but would also make it possible for governmental departments and agencies to obtain competent, reliable workers.

We urge you, therefore, to act promptly and favorably on H.R. 11523.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, for this opportunity to present the views of my organization on this matter.

Mr. ADDABBO. Thank you very much, Mr. Nagle, for taking your time to come here.

Mr. Corbett?

Mr. CORBETT. Mr. Chairman, I simply want to congratulate the gentleman on his statement and thank him for his testimony here today.

Mr. ADDABBO. Mr. Udall?

Mr. UDALL. That was a fine statement and I join with my friend from Pennsylvania in commending the witness for it.

Mr. ADDABBO. Mr. Daniels?

Mr. DANIELS. I also wish to join with my colleagues in complimenting the gentleman for making a very fine statement.

Mr. ADDABBO. Thank you very much, Mr. Nagle.

Mr. NAGLE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. ADDABBO. Our next witness is Mr. David Krause, second vice president, American Council of the Blind.

STATEMENT OF DAVID KRAUSE, SECOND VICE PRESIDENT, AMERICAN COUNCIL OF THE BLIND

Mr. KRAUSE. Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, my name is David Krause. I reside at 4628 Livingston road SE., Washington, D.C., and I am employed as regulations analyst for the Department of Occupations and Professions, District of Columbia Government. I am here this morning in my capacity as second vice president of the American Council of the Blind to speak in support of H.R. 11523.

The American Council of the Blind is a national organization of blind men and women, which is working at all times to promote and further employment opportunities for blind people. We welcome the opportunity to support H.R. 11523, because we consider it to be a step in the direction of providing greater employment opportunities in the Federal service for professionally qualified blind persons. We know of many instances in which able and well qualified blind persons have been denied employment with the Federal Government simply because the positions for which they were applying did not have the services of a secretary, and because the blind person was prevented by law from obtaining a reader assistant from outside sources.

While the American Council of the Blind is primarily concerned with the effect that such a situation has on the blind applicant, we think that it should also be pointed out that the Federal Government loses as well in these instances. Not only is the Federal agency denied the services of a capable, loyal, and dependable employee, but in many such instances, the blind person concerned may be forced into being a tax consumer instead of a tax contributor. Failing to obtain employment, it may be necessary for the blind person to turn to public assistance for survival. If passage of H.R. 11523 can make it possible for just one more qualified blind person to obtain Federal employment than would otherwise be the case, then the American Council of the Blind believes that this legislation is fully justified.

While wholeheartedly supporting H.R. 11523, the American Council of the Blind has two points of concern with respect to this legislation. First, we wonder whether the State rehabilitation agencies for the blind will assume the responsibility for providing the reader assistant for a blind employee, as a part of rehabilitation. And, second, we wonder whether any Government agency will attempt to use this legislation to justify the withdrawal of regular agency secretarial service from a blind employee now entitled to it. In order to encourage the first practice and to preclude the second, the American Council of the Blind respectfully recommends that the report accompanying this bill contain a statement of intent with respect to each of the two points just mentioned.

In conclusion, the American Council of the Blind wishes again to declare its support of H.R. 11523 and to express the hope that this committee will take favorable action on this much-needed legislation in the very near future. Thank you.

Mr. ADDABBO. Thank you very much, Mr. Krause, for taking your time to come before our committee.

Mr. Corbett?

Mr. CORBETT. Mr. Chairman, I want to thank this gentleman, also, for his appearance here today and for his enlightening testimony and to assure him that insofar as I can influence action, this amendment will be included and the report certainly will highlight the two items he has emphasized.

Mr. ADDABBO. Mr. Udall?

Mr. UDALL. I join in the comments made by Mr. Corbett and hope we can act promptly on this legislation.

I think Mr. Corbett is to be commended for all of the work he has done on it and in sponsoring the bill.

Mr. ADDABBO. Mr. Broyhill?

Mr. BROYHILL. No questions.

Mr. ADDABBO. Mr. Daniels?

Mr. DANIELS. No questions.

Mr. ADDABBO. Thank you very much, Mr. Krause.

Mr. KRAUSE. Thank you, sir.

Mr. ADDABBO. That concludes the hearings on H.R. 11523 and the committee will now go into executive session.

(Thereupon, the hearing was adjourned at 10 a.m., Thursday, May 24, 1962.)





