

# Calendar No. 16

69TH CONGRESS }  
1st Session }

SENATE

} REPORT  
No. 8

## BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE UNITED STATES SOLDIERS' HOME

DECEMBER 21, 1925.—Ordered to be printed

Mr. WADSWORTH, from the Committee on Military Affairs, submitted the following

### REPORT

[To accompany S. 1484]

The Committee on Military Affairs, to which was referred the bill (S. 1485) to amend section 1, act of March 4, 1909 (sundry civil act), so as to make the Chief of Finance of the Army a member of the Board of Commissioners of the United States Soldiers' Home, has had the same under consideration and reports with the recommendation that it pass.

In a letter to the chairman of your committee under date of December 9, 1925, the Secretary of War recommends the passage of this legislation. His letter is as follows:

DECEMBER 9, 1925.

Hon. JAMES W. WADSWORTH, Jr.,

*Chairman Committee on Military Affairs, United States Senate.*

MY DEAR SENATOR WADSWORTH: By section 1, act of March 4, 1909 (sundry civil act, 35 Stat. 1004) the membership of the Board of Commissioners United States Soldiers' Home was prescribed to consist of—

1. The Surgeon General of the Army.
2. The Commissary General of the Army.
3. The Adjutant General of the Army.
4. The Quartermaster General of the Army.
5. The Chief of Engineers of the Army.
6. The Judge Advocate General of the Army.
7. The governor of the Soldiers' Home.

This section reads as follows:

"*Provided*, That hereafter the government and control of the United States military prison shall, under the Secretary of War, be vested in the Board of Commissioners of the United States Soldiers' Home, which board shall consist as at present of the Surgeon General, the Commissary General, The Adjutant General, the Quartermaster General, the Chief of Engineers, the Judge Advocate General, and the governor of the Home, and the president of said board, who shall be the senior in rank of the members thereof, shall submit annually to the Secretary of War, for transmission to Congress, a full statement of the financial and other affairs of both the home and the prison for the preceding fiscal year." (35 Stat. 1004.)

It has been amended by paragraph 3, section 2, act of March 4, 1915 (38 Stat. 1085), and by the Army appropriation act of August 24, 1912.

Paragraph 3, section 2, act of March 4, 1915, took the government and control of the United States military prison (changing the name to the United States Disciplinary Barracks) away from the Board of Commissioners of the Soldiers' Home and vested them in The Adjutant General of the Army. It did not change the membership of the Board of Commissioners of the Soldiers' Home.

The Army appropriation act of August 24, 1912, consolidated the supply departments of the Army into the Quartermaster Corps, discontinuing the office of commissary general of the Army. A vacancy was thereby created on the Board of Commissioners of the Soldiers' Home.

The president of the Board of Commissioners of the Soldiers' Home, under date of November 18, 1925, has recommended that section 1, act of March 4, 1909 (sundry civil act), be further amended so as to make the Chief of Finance of the Army a member of the board to fill the place thereon which was formerly filled by the commissary general of the Army, stating his reasons therefor in the following language:

"The Finance Department of the Army is intimately concerned with the financial affairs of the home, particularly in connection with the collection of its income from fines, forfeitures, and the unclaimed estates of deceased soldiers, and while the present Chief of Finance has aided the board in every way possible and shown special interest in the home, it is considered that his capacity for service both to the board and the home would be greatly increased if he were given the authority and responsibility of a commissioner.

"His predecessors, the Paymaster Generals of the Army, have been members of the board at various times in the past, viz, from 1851, upon the establishment of the home, until 1859; again from 1902 to 1904; and again in the person of the Quartermaster General as chief of the consolidated quartermaster, subsistence, and pay departments from 1912 to 1920. But in 1920, when the Finance Department was separated, by law, from the Quartermaster Corps, provision was not made for continuing the Chief of Finance as a member of the board.

"The proposed amendment would therefore supply the omission made in 1920 and at the same time fill the vacancy of the commissary general caused by the consolidation act of 1912.

"Previous to 1918 the board consisted of seven members, and if the law were amended as proposed the board would again consist of seven members, as follows: The Adjutant General, the Judge Advocate General, the Quartermaster General, the Surgeon General, the Chief of Engineers, the Chief of Finance, the governor of the home."

The War Department concurs in the recommendation of the president of the Board of Commissioners of the United States Soldiers' Home that this amendatory legislation be enacted, being of the opinion that the reasons therefor, as stated by him, are sound, and that the result would be in the interest of increased efficiency.

No additional cost to the Government is involved.

A bill to effect the proposed legislation is herewith attached for your consideration, with recommendation that it be enacted into law.

I have designated the following witnesses to represent the department in case your committee should want to have a hearing on this proposed legislation:

Maj. Gen. R. C. Davis, The Adjutant General.

Maj. Gen. Kenzie W. Walker, Chief of Finance.

Maj. Gen. Tasker H. Bliss, retired, president Board of Commissioners United States Soldiers' Home.

A similar letter is being addressed to the chairman Committee on Military Affairs, House of Representatives.

Sincerely yours,

DWIGHT F. DAVIS,  
Secretary of War.