

## PROVIDING BLANK AMMUNITION FOR VETERANS ORGANIZATIONS

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APRIL 3 (legislative day, APRIL 2), 1952.—Ordered to be printed

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Mr. LONG, from the Committee on Armed Services, submitted the following

### R E P O R T

[To accompany H. R. 4949]

The Committee on Armed Services, to whom was referred the bill (H. R. 4949) to amend the act of February 10, 1920, so as to provide for free blank ammunition for veterans' organizations for use in connection with the funeral ceremonies of deceased veterans, and for other ceremonial purposes, having considered the same, report favorably thereon without amendment and recommend that the bill do pass.

#### PURPOSE OF THE BILL

The purpose of H. R. 4949 is to amend the act of February 10, 1920, so as to provide free blank ammunition for veterans' organizations for use in connection with the funeral ceremonies of deceased veterans and on other ceremonial occasions.

#### EXPLANATION OF THE BILL

The act of February 10, 1920, as amended (50 U. S. C., sec. 62) provides that the Secretary of War is authorized to sell blank ammunition to veterans' organizations at cost price plus the cost of packing and transportation. The act further authorized him to loan obsolete or condemned Army rifles to such organizations providing that no more than 10 such rifles could be issued to any one post. The legislation would amend this act by providing free blank ammunition to veterans' organizations.

Only national veterans' organizations recognized by the Veterans' Administration benefit from the proposed legislation.

These organizations would be required to pay for the cost of packing, handling, and transportation of the ammunition which they would receive free of charge. This limitation will tend to place some

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limit on the amount of ammunition which would be applied for under the authority set forth in the bill.

### BUDGET DATA; DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATION

It is difficult to determine the exact cost of the legislation. Ceremonies conducted by veterans' organizations are usually held on occasions such as Armistice Day, Memorial Day, and the Fourth of July. However, there is no way of determining how many funeral ceremonies will be held. In the calendar year 1951 a total of 432,000 rounds of blank ammunition were sold to veterans' organizations under the provisions of the act of February 10, 1920. At present-day costs, the value of that amount of ammunition is \$28,000. The handling costs amounted to about 5 percent of the ammunition and the transportation costs are indeterminate. It is to be expected that because the ammunition is being furnished free of charge that more will be requested by veterans' organizations than has been in the past when the cost price of the ammunition was charged. The best estimates of the Department of the Army places the cost of the legislation between \$100,000 and \$150,000.

The Department of the Army interposes no objection to the bill, as amended, as is indicated by the following letter:

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY,  
Washington, D. C., October 5, 1951.

Hon. CARL VINSON,  
Chairman, Committee on Armed Services,  
House of Representatives.

DEAR MR. VINSON: Reference is made to your request to the Secretary of Defense with respect to H. R. 2981 and H. R. 4949, identical bills to amend the act of February 10, 1920, so as to provide for the free distribution of blank ammunition to veterans' organizations for use in connection with the funeral ceremonies of deceased veterans. The Secretary of Defense has delegated to the Department of the Army the responsibility for expressing the views of the Department of Defense thereon.

The Department of the Army on behalf of the Department of Defense has considered the above-mentioned bills, the purpose of which is to furnish blank ammunition at no cost to veterans' organizations for use by them in connection with funeral ceremonies of deceased soldiers, sailors, and marines and for other post or camp cemeterial purposes.

Enactment of this proposed legislation would necessitate making funds available for the procurement of necessary ammunition required thereby. Present stocks are maintained on the basis of estimated requirements for Regular Army issue demand and to meet the requirements of the Department of the Air Force and Department of the Navy including the Marine Corps. Also, present stock level is sufficient to provide for the sale of blank ammunition to civilian components and organizations authorized to purchase (i. e., as provided in the act of February 10, 1920, as amended). In the latter circumstance the receipts from such sales are applied to the procurement of additional amounts of ammunition.

At the present time blank ammunition is sold to veterans' organizations at cost price, plus cost of packing and transportation. Under the proposed act it would be issued and delivered to such posts and camps free of charge. In order to insure that the Department of the Army interests will be protected and that only national veterans' organizations recognized by the Veterans' Administration will benefit by this proposed legislation, it is recommended that it be amended as follows:

- (a) Insert the following phrase after the first "of", line 1, page 2, "national veterans' organizations recognized by the Veterans' Administration";
- (b) Delete the phrase "organizations composed of honorably discharged soldiers, sailors or marines" from lines 1 and 2, page 2;
- (c) Insert the following phrase after the word "charge", line 6, page 2, "but without expense to the United States for packing, handling and transportation."

Should H. R. 2981 or H. R. 4949 be amended in accordance with the foregoing recommendations the Department of the Army would interpose no objection to its enactment into law.

In the event of its enactment, this proposed legislation will involve an additional estimated annual expenditure of \$150,000.

This report has been coordinated among the departments and boards in the Department of Defense in accordance with procedures prescribed by the Secretary of Defense.

The Bureau of the Budget advises that "while there would be no objection to the presentation to the chairman, Committee on Armed Services, House of Representatives, of such report on H. R. 2981 as you deem appropriate, you are advised that the Bureau of the Budget believes that existing law provides an equitable and satisfactory means for making blank ammunition available to veterans' organizations for use on appropriate occasions."

Sincerely yours,

FRANK PACE, Jr., *Secretary of the Army.*

CHANGES IN EXISTING LAW

In compliance with subsection 4 of rule XXIX of the Standing Rules of the Senate, there is printed herewith in roman type existing law in which no change is proposed; existing law proposed to be omitted is enclosed in black brackets, and new matter is printed in italics:

The Secretary of [War is] *the Army is hereby* authorized under rules, limitations, and regulations to be prescribed by him, to loan obsolete or condemned Army rifles, slings, and cartridge belts to posts or camps of [organizations composed of honorably discharged soldiers, sailors, or marines] *national veterans' organizations recognized by the Veterans' Administration*, for use by them in connection with funeral ceremonies of deceased soldiers, sailors, and marines, and for other post or camp ceremonial purposes; and to [sell] *issue and deliver to such posts and camps free of charge, but without expense to the United States for packing, handling, and transportation*, blank ammunition in suitable amounts for [said] *such rifles [at cost price, plus cost of packing, and transportation]: Provided, however, That not to exceed ten such rifles shall be issued to any one post or camp.*

