

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND CIVILIAN REHABILITA-
TION IN THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

OCTOBER 1 (legislative day, SEPTEMBER 18), 1940.—Ordered to be printed

Mr. TYDINGS, from the Committee on Territories and Insular Affairs,
submitted the following

REPORT

[To accompany S. 4218]

The Committee on Territories and Insular Affairs, to whom was referred the bill (S. 4218) to extend to the Virgin Islands the provisions of certain laws relating to vocational education and civilian rehabilitation, having considered the same, report favorably thereon with amendments and recommend that the bill as amended do pass.

The purpose of the proposed legislation is to extend to the Virgin Islands the benefits of the Federal program for cooperation with the States in the promotion of vocational education and of vocational rehabilitation of persons injured in industry.

The amendments to the bill reported by the committee are those suggested by the Administrator of the Federal Security Agency in his report upon the proposed legislation. The bill, as reported by the committee, has the approval of the Administrator.

The Administrator indicates in his report that the vocational education needs of the islands are greater in the agricultural and home-economics fields than they are in those of trade, industrial, and distributive occupational subjects. Consequently, the committee considered it appropriate to adopt the amendment to the vocational education portion of the bill suggested by the Administrator, which would enable the commissioner of education to proportion the allocation of funds to the islands for the various types of vocational education in such manner as to provide the greatest amounts of funds for those types of vocational education most needed in the islands.

The committee has also adopted the suggestion of the Administrator that the bill be amended to require that the islands provide funds for vocational rehabilitation to match those contributed by the Federal Government.

The report of the Administrator on the proposed legislation is as follows:

FEDERAL SECURITY AGENCY,
OFFICE OF THE ADMINISTRATOR,
Washington, August 27, 1940.

Hon. MILLARD E. TYDINGS,
Chairman, Committee on Territories and Insular Affairs,
United States Senate, Washington, D. C.

MY DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Further reference is made to your letter of August 5, 1940, to the Federal Advisory Board for Vocational Education relative to S. 4218, a bill to extend to the Virgin Islands the provisions of certain laws relating to vocational education and civilian rehabilitation, which was referred to this Agency for reply.

The bill proposes to extend to the Virgin Islands the benefits of the Federal program of cooperation with the States for vocational education (20 U. S. C., ch. 2) and the benefits of the Federal program of cooperation with the States in the vocational rehabilitation of persons injured in industry (29 U. S. C., ch. 4).

For vocational education an appropriation of \$40,000 is authorized annually to be allocated to the Virgin Islands for the various phases of the program, such allocation to be matched by the Government of the Virgin Islands as prescribed by the bill.

For vocational rehabilitation there is authorized to be appropriated the sum of \$10,000 annually for a period of 5 years to be available for allotment regardless of the amount of local funds available for matching purposes.

The general purposes of S. 4218 seem to be meritorious, as there appears to be no reason for excluding the people of the United States who are residents of the Virgin Islands from the benefits of these two programs.

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

Relative to the vocational-education program, there is on file in the Office of Education a report made in December 1939 by its regional agents for agricultural, home economics, and trade and industrial education which includes information secured from the Honorable Frederick Dixon, superintendent of education of the Municipality of St. Thomas and St. John, V. I. From this report it would appear that—

1. There is some opportunity and a need for establishing programs of vocational education in agriculture, especially on the island of St. Croix. The report indicates that there are some 3 school plants that may be suitable sites for these activities. On St. Croix, an agricultural community, there are about 500 out-of-school young men in need of vocational training, while only about 300 boys attend high school. The apparent need is to provide useful education to those not in school.

2. Since all girls are potential homemakers and since there would no doubt be a demand and need for this type of training on each of the islands it would seem that there is greater opportunity for establishing courses in vocational home economics than in any other phase of vocational education.

3. Because of the comparatively small number of persons engaged in the trades and industries, the scattered nature of the population (there being only 3 towns of any size at all, the largest having a population of 7,036 and the smallest only 2,698), and the diversity of industries, it is very doubtful if a functioning program of trade and industrial education could be profitably established in more than 3 or 4 centers.

4. Because of the even smaller number of persons engaged in distributive occupations and the fact that they are, no doubt, scattered throughout the islands in the various trading centers, it would appear that there is only a very limited opportunity for establishing vocational training programs in this field of vocational education.

In accordance with the indication that the opportunities for effective work in the fields of agriculture and home economics are considerably greater in the islands than those in the trade and industrial and distributive occupational fields it is thought desirable to adjust the proposed allocation of the funds to permit larger expenditures in those two fields. In making such an adjustment the lack of any program heretofore in the islands and the consequent difficulty in determining need or demand to any degree of exactitude would dictate allowance of some flexibility. This need appears to be recognized in the bill by the provision of

section 2 that the funds shall be allocated in the proportions specified by the Office of Education to the following purposes:

"1. Salaries and necessary travel expenses of teachers of the following subjects: Agricultural, home economics, trade and industrial, distributive occupational; and

"2. Maintenance of teacher training, including supervision, in the subjects enumerated in this section."

It is my thought that this limitation would fail to accomplish the desired end. As indicated above, it is probable that greatest need in the islands will be found in the agricultural and home economics fields. I feel that the flexibility should be such as to permit larger allocation to these two fields. In providing such flexibility I suggest that the bill follow the lines of division between phases of the program that are followed in present law. To accomplish this I recommend that in section 2 on page 2 of the bill lines 7 through 16 be deleted and that there be substituted in lieu thereof language somewhat as follows:

"SEC. 2. Any sums appropriated pursuant to the authority contained in section 1 shall be allocated to the following purposes in the proportions specified by the Commissioner of Education with the approval of the Federal Security Administrator:

"1. For the salaries and necessary travel expenses of teachers, supervisors, and directors of agricultural subjects.

"2. For the salaries and necessary travel expenses of teachers, supervisors, and directors of home-economics subjects.

"3. For the salaries and necessary travel expenses of teachers, supervisors, and directors of trade and industrial subjects.

"4. For the salaries and necessary travel expenses of teachers, supervisors, and directors of, and maintenance of teacher training in, distributive occupational subjects.

"5. For preparing teachers, supervisors, and directors of agricultural, trade and industrial, and home-economics subjects."

It will be noted that these five are the divisions to which vocational education funds are allocated under present law (20 U. S. C., sec. 15h, 15i, and 15j).

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

Section 3 of S. 4218 proposes to appropriate annually for a period of 5 years the sum of \$10,000 to be available for allotment to the Virgin Islands for vocational rehabilitation regardless of the amount of local funds available for matching purposes. This is quite a radical departure from the provisions of previous rehabilitation legislation, and it is one that this Agency does not recommend. The value of local matching of funds in stimulating local interest, initiative, and responsibility for the development of a program will hardly be questioned. If there is not a sufficient amount of local interest to provide financial participation, the wisdom of attempting the program is doubted. I, therefore, suggest that section 3 of the bill be amended to read as follows:

"SEC. 3. The Virgin Islands shall be entitled to share in the benefits of the Act entitled 'An Act to provide for the promotion of vocational rehabilitation of persons disabled in industry or otherwise and their return to civil employment' approved June 2, 1920 (41 Stat. 735), and any Act amendatory thereof or supplementary thereto, upon the same terms and conditions as any of the several States. There is authorized to be appropriated, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, the sum of \$10,000 annually commencing July 1, 1940, to be available for allotment under such Act to the Virgin Islands." It will be noted that this is substantially the language used in extending vocational rehabilitation to Hawaii and Puerto Rico (43 Stat. 18, 29 U. S. C. 45; 46 Stat. 1489, 29 U. S. C. 45a).

With the above-suggested amendments I recommend enactment of S. 4218. This Agency is advised by the Bureau of the Budget that if the appropriations authorized in sections 1 and 3 were for the fiscal year 1942 rather than 1941 enactment of the bill would not be in conflict with the program of the President. The Bureau of the Budget further states that there is no objection to the presentation for the consideration of your committee of my report recommending an amendment with respect to the distribution of the appropriated funds and also recommending the elimination of the nonmatching provision of section 3 of the bill.

Sincerely yours,

PAUL V. McNUTT, *Administrator.*

