

PROVIDING ADMISSION TO ST. ELIZABETHS HOSPITAL
OF PERSONS RESIDENT OR DOMICILED IN VIRGIN
ISLANDS

MAY 20 (legislative day, APRIL 24, 1940).—Ordered to be printed

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

REPORT

[To accompany H. R. 9576]

The Committee on Territories and Insular Affairs, to whom was referred the bill (H. R. 9576) relating to the admission to St. Elizabeths Hospital of persons resident or domiciled in the Virgin Islands of the United States, having considered the same, report favorably thereon without amendment and recommend that the bill do pass.

The bill has the approval of the Department of the Interior and its purposes are set out in full in the following report from the Committee on the District of Columbia of the House of Representatives which accompanied the bill in that House.

[H. Rept. No. 2108, 76th Cong., 3d sess.]

The Committee on the District of Columbia, to whom was referred the bill (H. R. 9576) providing for the admission to St. Elizabeths Hospital of persons resident or domiciled in the Virgin Islands of the United States, having considered the same, report favorably thereon without amendment and recommend that the bill do pass.

This bill authorizes the admission to St. Elizabeths Hospital in the District of Columbia of nationals and citizens who reside or are domiciled in the Virgin Islands, and who have legally been adjudged to be insane in the islands. The bill also would permit the admission to St. Elizabeths of nationals who are permanent residents of the Virgin Islands but who are legally adjudged insane while temporarily in another insular possession or a Territory or in the continental United States.

In the Virgin Islands there is no mental hospital, nor are there adequate facilities for the care of the mentally ill. It has recently come to the attention of the Department that, although provision is made for the hospital care of mentally ill American citizens in the Territory of Alaska, in the Canal Zone, and even those residing in Canada, no provision has been made for those citizens and nationals living in the Virgin Islands who develop mental disease and who require hospital care. The Department is informed that there are in the islands a number of persons who are mentally ill and who are confined under conditions which no

enlightened nation should tolerate in its possessions. The Virgin Islands government cannot provide adequate treatment and care for these people.

Once provision is made for the mentally ill now in the islands, the number of persons who would be affected by such a bill would, in all probability, be very few—almost certainly not exceeding 10 in any year, and the continuing expense of such a provision of law would be small. No capital outlay for land or buildings would be entailed. The enactment of such legislation would provide protection for the citizens and nationals in the Virgin Islands who are mentally ill or who may develop mental disorder and who would, if living in any other part of the United States, be eligible for care in a mental hospital.

The proposed bill is modeled upon existing provisions of law relating to American citizens residing in the Canal Zone and in Canada (24 U. S. C., secs. 196, 196a).

The Secretary of the Interior approves the measure and the Director of the Bureau of the Budget advises there is no objection on the part of that office to the bill.

