

## EXTENDING THE PROVISIONS OF THE SELECTIVE TRAINING AND SERVICE ACT TO THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

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JUNE 21, 1944.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the state  
of the Union and ordered to be printed

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

### REPORT

[To accompany H. R. 4810]

The Committee on Military Affairs to whom was referred the bill (H. R. 4810) to extend the provisions of the Selective Training and Service Act of 1940, as amended, to the Virgin Islands, having considered the same, submit the following report thereon, with the recommendation that it do pass.

The Selective Training and Service Act of 1940, as amended, provides that every male citizen of the United States, and every other male person residing in the United States, shall register and be liable for training and service in the land and naval forces.

The "United States," however, is defined in a geographical sense by section 15 (b) of the act in question as—

\* \* \* the several States, the District of Columbia, Alaska, Hawaii, and Puerto Rico.

There are at the present time some 2,000 male persons between the ages of 18 and 45, not United States citizens, residing in the Virgin Islands. Many of these persons, however, owe allegiance to no other country and are loyal to the United States. These persons are anxious to have the opportunity of taking an active part in the defense of this country.

The bill in question was sponsored by the Department of the Interior at the request of the Governor of the Virgin Islands. The Director of Selective Service and the Director of the Bureau of the Budget both advise that there is no objection to passage of the proposed legislation.

## 2 EXTEND PROVISIONS OF SELECTIVE TRAINING AND SERVICE ACT

There follow letters received by the Committee on Military Affairs with reference to the proposed legislation:

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,  
Washington, March 25, 1944.

HON. SAM RAYBURN,  
*Speaker of the House of Representatives,*  
Washington, D. C.

MY DEAR MR. SPEAKER: At the request of Governor Harwood, of the Virgin Islands, I transmit herewith a draft of proposed legislation to extend the provisions of the Selective Training and Service Act of 1940, as amended, to the Virgin Islands, and urge that it receive favorable consideration by the Congress.

Sections 2 and 3 of the Selective Training and Service Act of 1940 provide that "\* \* \* every male citizen of the United States, and every other male person residing in the United States \* \* \*" shall register and be liable for training and service in the land or naval forces of the United States. Section 15 (b), however, defines "United States," when used in a geographical sense, as "\* \* \* the several States, the District of Columbia, Alaska, Hawaii and Puerto Rico."

There are residing in the Virgin Islands many persons who, although technically not citizens of the United States, owe allegiance to no other country and are entirely loyal to the United States. They have expressed both disappointment and resentment at not being afforded the opportunity of taking an active part in the defense of this country. Their attitude is justifiable and admirable and I respectfully urge that the proposed legislation be enacted.

The Bureau of the Budget has advised that there is no objection to submission of the proposed legislation to the Congress.

Sincerely yours,

MICHAEL W. STRAUS,  
*Acting Secretary of the Interior.*

MAY 31, 1944.

HON. ANDREW J. MAY,  
*Chairman, Committee on Military Affairs,*  
*House of Representatives, Washington, D. C.*

DEAR MR. MAY: The War Department has no objection to the enactment of H. R. 4810, Seventy-eighth Congress, a bill to extend the provisions of the Selective Training and Service Act of 1940, as amended, to the Virgin Islands.

The only persons now residing in the Virgin Islands who are subject to registration and are liable for military service under the provisions of the Selective Training and Service Act of 1940, as amended, are citizens of the United States within the designated age groups. This bill would extend the scope of that act so that other male persons residing therein would also be subject to registration and liability for military service in the same manner as male residents (noncitizens of the United States) of the several States, the District of Columbia, Alaska, Hawaii, and Puerto Rico.

It is estimated that there are 2,000 male persons between the ages of 18 and 45 who are not American citizens and who are now residing in those islands.

The Bureau of the Budget advised with respect to a similar report on an identical bill, S. 1825, Seventy-eighth Congress, that there was no objection to its submission to the Congress.

Sincerely yours,

HENRY L. STIMSON,  
*Secretary of War.*

SELECTIVE SERVICE SYSTEM,  
Washington, D. C. May 29, 1944.

HON. ANDREW J. MAY,  
*Chairman, Committee on Military Affairs,*  
*House of Representatives, Washington, D. C.*

DEAR MR. MAY: This will acknowledge receipt of your letter of May 24, 1944, in which you request the views of the Selective Service System on H. R. 4810, a bill to extend the provisions of the Selective Training and Service Act of 1940, as amended, to the Virgin Islands.

This bill proposes to amend section 15 (b) of the Selective Training and Service Act to include in the term "United States," when used in a geographical sense, the Virgin Islands.

Under sections 2 and 3 (a) of the Selective Training and Service Act of 1940, as amended, the following persons within the designated age groups are obligated to register and are liable for training and service in the land or naval forces of the United States:

- (a) Every male citizen of the United States; and
- (b) Every other male person residing in the United States.

Section 15 (b) of the act provides: "The term 'United States,' when used in a geographical sense, shall be deemed to mean the several States, the District of Columbia, Alaska, Hawaii, and Puerto Rico."

On October 26, 1943, the President, by proclamation, directed the registration of every male citizen of the United States between the ages of 18 and 45 who had not been registered under previous proclamations because he had not returned to, or entered, the "United States," as defined in section 15 (b) of the act. In accordance with the proclamation, registration facilities were established outside the United States and registration of United States citizens was accomplished. In order to facilitate induction procedures in the Virgin Islands, arrangements were made for the establishment of selective-service machinery similar to that employed in the United States, including local boards and boards of appeal.

Under the present law, aliens are obligated to register and are liable for training and service in the land or naval forces of the United States, only if they are "residing in the United States," which latter term under the selective-service law does not include the Virgin Islands. Therefore, aliens residing in the Virgin Islands are not subject to the provisions of the selective-service law.

Unofficial information secured by this headquarters indicates that at the present time there are some 2,000 male persons between the ages of 18 and 45 who are not United States citizens and who are residing in the Virgin Islands. Some of these persons have gone to the islands in recent periods, but a considerable number of them have lived there for many years, owe allegiance to no other country, and under Public Law No. 640, passed on February 25, 1927, could have previously become United States citizens if they desired.

If the Selective Training and Service Act of 1940, as amended, is altered so that the words "United States" when used in a geographical sense therein, include the Virgin Islands, male noncitizens within the designated age groups residing in the Virgin Islands will become subject to the selective-service law. This headquarters has no objection to the proposed amendment.

The Bureau of the Budget advises that it has no objection to the submission of this report to your committee.

Sincerely yours,

LEWIS B. HERSHEY, *Director.*

Pursuant to the provisions of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the changes proposed in existing law are shown hereafter (existing law is shown in roman type; new material in italics; matter to be eliminated in black brackets):

SECTION 15 (B) OF THE ACT OF SEPTEMBER 16, 1940 (55 STAT. 896) AS AMENDED

(b) The term "United States," when used in a geographical sense, shall be deemed to mean the several States, the District of Columbia, Alaska, Hawaii, [and] Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands.



