

**STATEMENT OF HONORABLE JOHN E. FOGARTY, M.C., 2nd RHODE ISLAND CONGRESS,
SIGNAL DISTRICT, IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, ON THE INTRODUCTION OF
HIS BILL TO INCREASE THE EDUCATION AND TRAINING ALLOWANCES UNDER THE
VETERANS' READJUSTMENT ASSISTANCE ACT OF 1952. JANUARY 5, 1956.**

Mark Twain is credited with having referred to the weather as something that everyone talks about - but no one ever does anything about it!

I've heard - frequently - the same kind of criticism about legislative enactments by the Congress. Everyone talks about what's wrong with the law - but nobody does anything about it. I'd like to claim a place in history for having inspired the 84th Congress to do something about the shortcomings of the education provisions of the Veterans Readjustment Act of 1952 - that's Public Law 550 of the 82d Congress.

I am today introducing legislation which will provide a general increase in the rates of education and training allowance payable to veteran trainees enrolled under Title II of the Veterans Readjustment Assistance Act of 1952.

The bill I have introduced is restricted to increases in rates of payments for education and training only and in no manner affects the eligibility requirements for those veterans who desire to qualify; also, the bill applies only to veterans of the Korean conflict. No basic change is intended or implied; all that is asked is that this session of Congress recognize some basic facts - and do something specific to help veterans meet the problem which those basic facts have created.

Basic fact number one is - the Congress of the United States provided a machinery whereby the veteran of America's wars could get an education and so readjust himself to society, thus helping himself to be a better citizen and, at the same time, helping his country to make better use of

the veteran as a member of society who is making the maximum contribution of which he is capable.

Basic fact number two is - the veteran in school today is finding it very difficult to make ends meet; this strain jeopardizes his opportunity to be a good student, a good graduate, and hence, a good citizen who can provide his country with the maximum benefits of his talents.

My proposal asks only that we recognize these two facts and provide an increase in the allowances provided for in Public Law 500, as amended.

I would like to remind my colleagues that we live in a day when the spotlight is on the need for aid-to-education.

In the area of the sciences which, to our own personal knowledge, take on ever greater significance with each forward thrust of mechanical, electrical, aeronautical developments - to say nothing of developments in the atomic field - there is a awful lack of students devoted to the subject of study and exploration. It has been my personal experience that a student worried by financial harrassment is not the best possible student. A little worry may be a good thing - but if we want the young men who were foremost in our minds when we enacted the Veterans Readjustment Act to be good students - and future good scientists, or scholars - or even mighty good citizens - we should do whatever we can to reduce this worry factor to a minimum. For this reason, I have become acutely concerned with the need for an increase in these educational payment rates.

The Congress has considered and enacted two so-called GI bills - in 1944 and 1952. To the best of my recollection when these proposals were first broached there was no suggestion of a bonus or reward or pension.

There was a recognition - and I have to admit that this plea made the greatest impression on me - that because of war, a large segment of the youth of our country had been lifted from the natural stream of youth who would, in the normal course, attend college. In addition, there was a recognition of the fact that many young men and women who, under normal circumstances, would not attend college, had been made more mature by their wartime experiences and had become good educable material. Unless I am gravely mistaken, this was the moving cause behind the GI bills. There was, too, the readjustment phase - during which young men and women could get themselves better prepared to assume their proper places in the democratic society which is ours - with emphasis on education constantly rising.

That was the reason for the GI bills, in their educational aspects. It has now reached the point where it is so difficult for eligible and qualified and eager young men and women to continue in school because of the increase in the cost of living and the cost of education since the basic laws were written that the very purpose of this excellent legislation is being frustrated.

The GI bills, so-called, were never intended to be a complete subsidy. However, they were intended to be a great inducement - and a substantial help - to each veteran in obtaining a good education - to the betterment of himself, his family and our society.

Statistics are, to many, a bothersome thing, and I won't annoy you with them. I know I can rely on your intimate knowledge of the fact that it costs more today to obtain a degree in an institution of higher learning than it did when the original GI bill was passed in 1944.

The increase in the rates of payment to veterans which my bill asks for are small enough. But - and I urge my colleagues to consider this well - the need for an inducement to our veterans to go to school - to stay in school - to acquire all the knowledge which a good education can provide - is far greater today than it was when the original GI bill was enacted.

The whole pattern of this legislation has been one of assistance. I say again, never was it thought there would be a complete subsidy.

Times have changed - the need has changed only in the sense that it has grown greater. Costs have changed in two areas - they are greater and what is more fearful, they may become discouraging. We had faith in these veterans as defenders of our country. We should be proud of our continuing faith in them as crusaders for our country.

Help them to get the best possible education and we need have little fear for the future of their children - who, after all, see America through their fathers' eyes, whether it is a good and intelligent approach to Americanism or a discouraged and disillusioned portrayal of the attitude of the American Congress.