

STATEMENT OF CONGRESSMAN JOHN E. FOGARTY, DEMOCRAT OF RHODE ISLAND,
ON THE INTRODUCTION OF A BILL TO ESTABLISH AN EFFECTIVE PROGRAM TO
ALLEVIATE CONDITIONS OF SUBSTANTIAL AND PERSISTENT UNEMPLOYMENT AND
UNDEREMPLOYMENT IN CERTAIN ECONOMICALLY DEPRESSED AREAS. 2/11/57.

HR 4650

Today I am introducing a bill which represents a gathering together of many ideas which have been advanced in the hope of helping all segments of our society to enjoy the benefits of today's prosperous America.

This bill does not represent an entirely new idea. It is similar in conception to the Employment Act of 1946 through which the Congress demonstrated its firm belief that the federal government has a definite responsibility to so shape its policies that mass employment and production will prevail throughout the U.S. - on a plane as nearly equal for all as is possible.

There are some areas in the country where it can be said there is chronic underemployment. The damage caused by this type of underemployment is not confined to the hardships experienced by the families of the unemployed. It is something similar to a cancer in the economic life of a whole area. The condition saps the will for self-help, eats away at self-respect (and an entire community knows its own form of self-respect) and gradually undermines the education, health, community institutions and the living standards of many people. The entire nation suffers to some extent. There is a loss of the added productivity which would otherwise enhance the nation's wealth - there is also an increased tax burden on those who are able to pay because of the extra cost of welfare services.

The measure I am introducing is by no means a "hand out" program but is aimed ~~at~~ primarily at encouraging self-help. It proposes establishment of an Area Redevelopment Administration.

The Administration will have authority to provide technical assistance to depressed areas in the planning of their redevelopment. It will have authority also to make loans to new businesses and commercial enterprises coming into the area, as well as for the expansion and revitalizing of existing businesses. The bill contains authority for some outright grants but these grants actually fit into the pattern of encouraging these depressed communities to help themselves through the creation of more employment.

I intend to press vigorously for hearings as soon as the bill has been assigned to the appropriate committee. If my colleagues here will consider the measure consciously, I am confident it will meet with their approval. If the measure becomes law, as I fervently hope will be the case, new hope and courage will be brought to hundreds of thousands who now suffer through unemployment - hundreds of thousands who seek for no more than a job at a decent wage so that they can recreate their community and family lives as good Americans.