

REMARKS OF HONORABLE JOHN E. FOGARTY, M.C., 2nd DISTRICT OF RHODE ISLAND,
ON INTRODUCTION OF A BILL IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES TO PROHIBIT THE
GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION FROM ACQUIRING THE PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL
GRANGE AT JACKSON PLACE, WASHINGTON, D.C. AUGUST 14, 1957.

Having been a member of Laurel Grange No. 40, Harmony, Rhode Island, for the past 25 years and being very much interested in the welfare of the National Grange, I am today introducing a bill which would prohibit Government Agencies to acquire or use the National Grange headquarters site without specific Congressional approval.

For some time now, hundreds of Grange members in my District in Rhode Island have been writing to me and have enlisted my aid to try to save their headquarters property here in Washington. It appears, from speaking to others of my colleagues here in the House from various sections of the United States, that similar action has been taken in their Districts. You may say, this is an unusual request. Why are persons from all over the country up in arms calling upon Congress to assist in returning to a national organization a piece of property, 50 x 70, located in the Capital. I understand that back in 1941, land at 744 Jackson Place was purchased by the National Grange and that the building which now stands thereon was itself raised thanks to the united and concerted efforts and contributions of local grange units throughout the entire land.

I have looked into the matter and have been convinced that the Federal Government has no need of this property. The reason I have joined with several of my colleagues in presenting this legislation to the Congress is that I felt, the more members who rally behind the drive to save the National Grange Building, the better will be our chances of succeeding.

My bill provides that no portion of Lot 816, square 167, in the District of Columbia (the headquarters and property of the National Grange of the Patrons of Husbandry) shall be acquired for or used by any Agency of the Federal government. Too, the Administrator of the General Services Administration is directed to withdraw the declaration of taking of said lot heretofore filed by him in the United States District Court for the District of Columbia and to take such other action as may be necessary to restore title to said lot to the National Grange of the Patrons of Husbandry.

Our course is simple in this matter - the National Grange has a valuable piece of property in a very convenient location, actually not needed by the General Services Administration which contemplates to erect a new office building adjacent to it. I believe that we should take the necessary steps to prevent the taking of the National Grange property.