

STATEMENT OF HONORABLE JOHN E. FOGARTY, UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SECOND CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT OF RHODE ISLAND BEFORE THE HOUSE SUBCOMMITTEE ON SPECIAL EDUCATION, SPECIAL EDUCATION AND REHABILITATION STUDY, AT THE 71ST REGIMENT ARMORY, PARK AVENUE AND 34TH STREET, NEW YORK CITY, IN SUPPORT OF HIS HJRES 316 (HJRES 488) SPEECH AND HEARING BILL, ON OCTOBER 28, 1959

Mr. Chairman, I am indeed pleased to have the opportunity to appear as a witness at these hearings and to discuss the proposed legislation reflected in H.J.Res. 316 and the subsequent proposal, H.J.Res. 488, both of which I have co-sponsored with our good friend, Senator Lister Hill.

Most of my colleagues in the House of Representatives are aware of my deep personal interest in matters affecting the public health.

For the last 12 of my 18 years in Congress I have been active on the Health Subcommittee on Appropriations, either as chairman or as ranking member of the minority.

During this time I have taken great pride in the part I have been privileged to play in the establishment of broad, forward-looking programs of research in the medical and biological sciences. These programs, focusing on the major crippling diseases that chronically afflict mankind, as you know are supported and conducted by the National Institutes of Health of the Public Health Service.

Now it is my pleasure to speak in behalf of a similar program in a related area I believe is worthy of this subcommittee's most serious consideration.

I refer to the legislation before you. It proposes the creation of a system of grants-in-aid in support of the recruitment and training of teachers of the deaf, speech pathologists and audiologists. Why is legislation of this kind necessary? Is there truly an urgent need for it?

I would like to describe the problem to you, briefly.

About one-twentieth of our population -- some eight million or more persons of all ages -- is afflicted with hearing and associated speech disorders.

These impairments are not only a source of constant personal embarrassment to the sufferer. They also represent a terrible handicap to the individual in his efforts to achieve a normal, self-supporting status in the community.

The sad part is that the great majority of these people if given the chance are fully capable of learning how to develop their other abilities. All they need to attain their rightful places in society is the proper, professional help. Therein lies the problem.

And the problem is this: our supply of teachers and specialists trained and qualified to work in the field of speech and hearing therapy is totally inadequate. Lack of sufficient people trained to do the work is preventing the rehabilitation of a large segment of our handicapped but useful work force. The cost in wasted lives is, of course, immeasurable.

Moreover, the burden on the taxpayer who must pay to support the deaf and those with impaired speech in institutions is intolerable. Let me present some figures to illustrate the point.

Today we have 30,000 deaf children of school age. Each year this total increases. A merely adequate student-teacher ratio calls for 500 new teachers each year. But fewer than 150 are being trained this year. Of the institutions accredited for training of teachers of the deaf, six do not have a single student enrolled.

For persons suffering from speech defects, fully 20,000 speech pathologists and audiologists are needed. Yet, today there are only 2,000 of these professionals certified as having successfully completed advanced training. Another 5,000 bear the label "uncertified" specialists. Although there is an acute need for 1,500 speech therapists annually, barely 400 are graduated each year.

All of this paints a sombre picture, especially where the children are concerned. In stark terms, scarcely more than one child in five who needs speech or hearing therapy is getting it.

As I have said before, the situation is critical. And the problem is not confined to one section or region of the country. It is nationwide in extent. Although many of the States have special programs for rehabilitation and training of people with speech and hearing defects, they are unable to cope with the total problem. The problem that exists

today is a clear-cut example of the type that should be attacked by having the Federal government assume an appropriate share of the burden. The proposed legislation will do this.

The Federal government has very effective treatment and rehabilitation programs for the deaf and hard of hearing for members of the armed forces and for veterans. The medical services of the Army and Navy and Veterans Administration have made rapid advances in caring for the deaf, the hard of hearing, and those suffering from associated speech defects. The success of these programs automatically raised the question: what is being done to meet the needs of the nation's school children, its aged, and the members of its work force in their most productive years?

Congress must act in this matter. We can be excused, perhaps, along with the average citizen, for not having faced this issue until now. Disorders of this kind are simply not dramatic enough to command attention in the way that certain of the chronic illnesses have.

But here and now we have a marvelous opportunity to perform a great good by investing a minimum amount of money in a field where dividends and bonuses are sure to be paid again and again.

We know that deafness and speech defects can be dealt with on a training and rehabilitation level. The point I want to make is that we must do all we can to see that more and more young people are encouraged to take an interest in the field of speech therapy and the teaching of the deaf.

The present bill is intended to resolve some of these manpower training difficulties. Let us see what exactly are the provisions of the bill.

First, it calls for the creation of a grants-in-aid program to be administered by the Commissioner of the Office of Education. These grants will be awarded to accredited public and nonprofit institutions in support of training for teachers of the deaf. These grants may be used by the institutions to assist in recruiting and training teachers, covering the cost of training and study, and for establishing and maintaining scholarships.

The grant applications will be considered by an advisory board of 12, established in the Office of Education. The members of the advisory board will be appointed by the Commissioner of Education with the approval of the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare. Incidentally, this follows the review and approval pattern that has functioned so well in the Public Health Service support of research and research training for the past several years.

Second, to aid in filling the need for more speech pathologists and audiologists, and to diagnose, train, and rehabilitate those with speech and hearing defects, the bill provides for grants-in-aid to assist public and other nonprofit institutions of higher education in recruiting and training speech pathologists and audiologists.

Similarly, grants provided under this phase of the program must be reviewed and recommended by an advisory committee of 12, established in the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation. The proposed legislation incorporates requirements that assure a high caliber of trained personnel. For example, only approved institutions of higher learning which qualify their graduates for an advanced certificate in speech pathology or audiology from a recognized national accrediting body will be given grants.

These grants may be used by such institutions to help defray the cost of courses of graduate training and study and for establishing and maintaining graduate fellowships.

What harvest of benefits do I visualize from this scattered seed?

Mr. Chairman, I am reminded of an earlier day, some fifteen years past, that marked the beginning of a mighty surge forward in the field of health research.

Those of us who witnessed the impressive start made by the National Institutes of Health soon realized that if it was going to maintain stride and keep from losing pace, we would have to take the necessary steps to assure a proper balance -- on a national scale -- between support of medical and biological research and an adequate pool of trained manpower with the capacity for conceiving and exploring research ideas.

Progress in expanding the support of research -- even at the comparatively low levels of the late forties -- had outstripped the development of trained manpower; the next step was clearly marked. Expanded programs in support of research were not the entire answer. We needed broad new programs in support of training to cope with the rapidly widening demand for research manpower.

Alerted to this new need, the American people promptly urged appropriate action by the Congress. The results achieved by the Public Health Service through the research training programs administered at NIH have emerged as an important facet in the progress of medical research in the 20th century.

It seems wholly logical, therefore, to propose that we take advantage of past success to achieve future goals. Let us put to use the theme of maintaining balance between the basic elements of speech and hearing rehabilitation programs in the same pattern that was applied to the whole field of medical research over 10 years ago.

Today, our knowledge of hearing and speech disorders is far greater than our capacities for applying that knowledge through adequately trained personnel. We cannot begin to apply our research findings on a clinical basis until the number of professionally trained teachers and speech pathologists and audiologists has been multiplied substantially.

If we are to help salvage any part of the eight million persons afflicted with deafness and speech impairments, we must strive to balance our efforts by matching manpower strength with research potentials.

The ultimate effect of a large-scale program such as this one can perhaps best be measured in terms of its impact on the individual. The total impact of an expanded program in speech and hearing rehabilitation can be evaluated in terms of the individual and multiplied 8 million times to obtain the sum of the national effort!

....the middle-aged survivor of a stroke who faces many months of patient and enlightened professional care to overcome his aphasia;

....the mother who hears the first sounds of speech from her deaf child;

....a group of young students receiving special instruction and experiencing new achievements as a result of new-found communications skills;

....the industrial worker back on the job, able to do his job effectively and safely; and

....the alert teen-ager who, short weeks ago, was labeled a delinquent until her surliness was traced to a congenital ear defect.



In years to come, I am confident that the record will show that favorable action by this subcommittee and the Congress on this legislation was not only an investment in an untapped reservoir of manpower but a priceless investment in human welfare as well.

STATEMENT ON THE NATIONWIDE PROBLEM IN PROVIDING FOR THOSE WITH  
IMPAIRED SPEECH AND HEARING INCLUDING REFERENCE TO H.R. RES. 488  
(IDENTICAL TO S.J. RES. 127) PREPARED AT THE REQUEST OF THE  
HON. JOHN P. FOGARTY, CHAIRMAN OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE ON LABOR  
AND HEW APPROPRIATIONS OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

December 15, 1959

There are in the population a large number of people with speech and hearing handicaps -- both children and adults -- who need special help if they are to function normally in our society. Special services in our country are provided mainly by health, rehabilitation, welfare, and educational agencies. Much could be said about the importance of each of these services. Essential is early case finding through health and welfare agencies as well as through the schools; especially important is care of adult citizens including the aged who suffer from impaired hearing. It is important for our public agencies at the local, state, and federal level, in cooperation with private agencies, to provide a balanced program of medical care, education, rehabilitation, and welfare services so that these citizens of all ages who are handicapped by speech or hearing defects can enjoy as full a life as possible and make a maximum contribution to society. On the whole, services to these citizens are far from adequate.

In discussing this problem and the needs of these individuals illustrations will be drawn mainly from the problems and needs of school age children and youth since it is obvious that unless our schools offer the best possible corrective help and suitable opportunity for education to these young citizens, later efforts directed toward rehabilitation, employment, and social adjustment will not be fully effective.

Children and youth with speech and hearing disorders comprise the largest single group of handicapped children. It is conservatively estimated that between  $1\frac{1}{2}$  and 2 million school-age children have speech or hearing impairments which are severe enough to interfere with their emotional, social, and intellectual development. The majority of these have speech defects; about one-fourth of them have limited but usable hearing, and are often referred to as "hard of hearing." A relatively small number, perhaps 40 thousand, are so severely handicapped as to be classified as profoundly deaf.

In a February 11, 1958 report from the Commissioner of Education, submitted in response to a request of the Subcommittee of the Committee on Appropriations of the United States House of Representatives, it was indicated that about 90 percent of the speech correction, lip-reading instruction, and auditory training for school-age children is carried on in the elementary and secondary schools. However, this type of service needs to be multiplied. There is a wide gap between the number of children and youth needing this service and the number actually receiving it.

The report stated that not more than one out of five of the school-age children requiring speech correction or special instruction because of hearing loss are receiving this. Only about 4,000 speech correctionists and teachers of children with impaired hearing are now in the Nation's schools and about 20,000 would be required.

It was also indicated, that while school programs should be extended and research continued and intensified, the single greatest deterrent to progress is the lack of qualified personnel. Thus, it seems that the goal of serving all of the Nation's children could not be reached without additional well-trained personnel. The task of recruiting and preparing the needed number of speech correctionists and special teachers is so great that without Federal aid State and local school systems and colleges and universities face an all but insurmountable task in attempting to meet this enormous problem. Further, a gap exists in the Federal contribution to the development of personnel in this field. Federal aid is now available for the training of medical and clinical personnel but not for the training of educational personnel.

While the total number of deaf children and youth is small in comparison to the total school-age population, the needs of each deaf child are acute. The major problem which confronts the deaf child is that he cannot learn language in the usual imitative way. This has a tremendous influence on his ability to profit from educational opportunities. The school, therefore, must teach him in a systematic way to develop communication. It also must provide him with the usual school curriculum and the tools of learning. In addition to such

educational opportunities, the deaf will need, as they mature, much help from rehabilitation and guidance services. Some deaf individuals may require aid throughout their lives. Given suitable education and guidance, most of the deaf children and youth can develop into contributing well-adjusted members of society.

The task of preparing teachers for the deaf is highly technical and calls for extensive professional preparation. At present, schools face an increasingly critical shortage of qualified educators to work with these children. This is probably partly because teaching the deaf is one of the most difficult of all teaching tasks. It appears that unless more is done through such means as substantial scholarships, it will not be possible to recruit the necessary number of qualified and dedicated educators needed for this field. According to estimates not more than one-third of the number of teachers needed each year are being recruited and prepared. Furthermore, it appears that not enough promising persons are preparing for leadership positions. To illustrate, in 1953-54 not a single college reported awarding a doctoral degree in the education of the deaf.

Legislation directed toward solving the personnel problem in any one of the disciplines will be a step forward toward providing for those with impaired speech and hearing. S. J. Res. 488 is recognizing the need for qualified personnel to aid the largest single group of handicapped individuals, namely those with speech and hearing disorders. It is also recognizing the critical shortage of well-qualified teachers of the deaf and is suggesting a Federal scholarship program for classroom teachers in this field.

In the case of the deaf, the proposed legislation recognizes a serious human need even though it affects only a small segment of the population. The intent of this legislation is aimed at broadening the scope of Federal benefits to the less fortunate members of our society.

RM 12/15/59

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HJ Res 488

P R E S S   R E L E A S E

From the Office of  
Congressman John E. Fogarty

For Release:  
Wednesday, October 28, 1959

Congressman John E. Fogarty today in a statement before the House Subcommittee on Special Education, Special Education and Rehabilitation Study, at the 71st Regiment Armory, Park Avenue and 34th Street, New York City, urged early sympathetic and favorable approval of his bill to assist persons afflicted by speech and hearing disorders.

The Fogarty bill, in the form of a joint resolution, helps make available to children handicapped by deafness the specially trained teachers of the deaf needed to develop their abilities and to individuals suffering speech and hearing impairments those specially trained speech pathologists and audiologists needed to help them overcome their handicaps.

Mr. Fogarty's bill calls for the creation of a grants-in-aid program to be administered by the Commissioner of the Office of Education. These grants will be awarded to accredited public and nonprofit institutions in support of training for teachers of the deaf and may be used to assist in recruiting and training teachers, covering the cost of training and study, and for establishing and maintaining scholarships.

Mr. Fogarty stated, "About 1/20 of our population -- some 8 million or more persons of all ages -- is afflicted with hearing and associated speech disorders. These impairments are not only a source of constant personal embarrassment to the sufferer, but they also represent a terrible handicap to the individual in his efforts to achieve a normal, self-supporting status in the community. Today we have 30,000 deaf children of school age and each year this total increases. A merely adequate student-teacher ratio calls for 500 new teachers each year, but fewer than 150 are being trained this year, and of the institutions accredited for training of teachers of the deaf, 6 do not have a single student enrolled."

Congressman Fogarty went on to say, "For persons suffering from speech defects, fully 20,000 speech pathologists and audiologists are needed -- yet, today there are only 2,000 of these professionals certified as having successfully completed advanced training. Another 5,000 bear the label 'uncertified' specialists. Although there is an acute need for 1,500 speech therapists annually, barely 400 are graduated each year."

"Congress must act in this matter," Congressman Fogarty said. "We can be excused, perhaps, along with the average citizen, for not having faced this issue until now. Disorders of this kind are simply not dramatic enough to command attention in the way that certain of the chronic illnesses have. But here and now we have a marvelous opportunity to perform a great good by investing a minimum amount of money in a field where dividends and bonuses are sure to be paid again and again." "In years to come," the Congressman continued, "I am confident the record will show that favorable action by this subcommittee and the Congress on this legislation was not only an investment in an untapped reservoir of manpower, but a priceless investment in human welfare as well."