

PRESS RELEASE

From the Office of:
Congressman John E. Fogarty

For Release
Thursday, April 15, 1965

Congressman John E. Fogarty today introduced in the U. S. House of Representatives a bill to authorize the free mailing of books and periodicals between public libraries and shut-ins.

In explaining this bill on the floor of the House, Mr. Fogarty stated, "Some community libraries have begun using bookmobiles as a means of bringing library service to people in their home neighborhoods. However, these bookmobiles usually park in a specific place to serve people who live within a radius of several blocks. Since it is impossible for shut-ins who are too ill, disabled, or infirm to walk several blocks to the bookmobile, and since it is not always possible or desirable for shut-ins to arrange for someone to select books for them, library service by mail is the only logical and efficient solution to providing adequate library service for housebound individuals."

"My bill would require the shut-in individual to furnish to the librarian or chief administrative officer of his local public library the statement of a physician attesting to the fact that the individual is permanently housebound owing to illness or disability or that he will be confined to his home for medical reasons for a period of not less than three months duration," Mr. Fogarty continued. "The bill would also require that the book or periodical be clearly marked "Free Matter for the Disabled" in the upper right-hand corner of the address area. Thus, with these provisions, the service would be simple to operate by both the library and the Post Office Department. Similar free and reduced postage rate privileges for books and equipment for the use of blind persons have been in operation since 1899 and have been most helpful to these persons."

"I am sure that all of my colleagues in the House of Representatives will join with me in supporting this urgently needed legislation as a means of stimulating adequate library service to shut-ins, the group of individuals who, perhaps more than any other, needs ready access to books and periodical literature."