

THE MINNESOTA ASSOCIATION FOR RETARDED CHILDREN, INC.

LEGISLATIVE NEWSBULLETIN

March 27, 1963

DAY ACTIVITY CENTERS - H.F. 379 & S.F. 277

This bill, which has passed both the Senate Welfare and the House Health and Welfare Committees, is now in the House Appropriations Committee's sub-committee on welfare and the Senate Finance Committee's sub-committee on welfare. House sub-committee chairman is Repr, Douglas Head of Minneapolis; Senate sub-committee chairman is Sen. Fay George Child of Chippewa, Lac Qui Parie and Yellow Medicine Counties. We expect that there will be a hearing before the Senate sub-committee during the week of April 1. There is considerable enthusiasm for this bill amongst legislators and hopes for its passage are good. However, we need to keep urging that \$220,000 be allocated for this biennium. There is a need for \$72,000 just for the centers that are presently underway and are now receiving aid.

RANGE INSTITUTION - H.F. 1288 & S.F. 1211 (new bill)

This bill would appropriate \$5,000 for expenses of a site selection committee to select a site for an institution on the Iron Range. There is considerable speculation whether this would be a small institution for the mentally retarded or might also include a day-night unit for the mentally ill as well as some school type facilities for crippled children who cannot get education in their own home district. Range legislators are no longer pushing for the \$6 million appropriation asked for in the previous bill, which was H.F. 172 & S.F. 71.

OWATONNA STATE SCHOOL - H.F. 1311 (new bill)

This bill would set an absolute limit of 21 years of age for attendance at the Owatonna State School. It would also insert the word "treatment" in the description of the purpose of the institution.

EXTENSION OF PROBATION PERIODS FOR SPECIAL TEACHERS IN INSTITUTIONS - S.F. 1273,
(new bill)

This bill would set the probationary period for special teachers in state institutions for the mentally retarded, emotionally disturbed, blind and deaf, at two years; presently, it is six months. It is felt that this would be a good measure since the six months probationary period falls in the middle of a school term; now the institution has a choice of keeping the person on permanently or getting rid of the teacher right in the middle of the school term when other teachers are all under contract and would be difficult to obtain. This bill is being recommended by the Advisory Committee on Handicapped, Gifted and Exceptional Children.

BILLS YET TO BE HEARD

The bills relating to boarding care reimbursement to counties, earmarking Of fees paid for care of retarded in institutions for research, and raising the limit for state aid for teachers of special classes from \$3,600 to \$4,800 or removing the ceiling, have yet to be heard by their respective committees. The usual procedure is for the authors of these bills to request the committee chairman for a hearing time.

SHELTERED GROUP HOMES - H.F. 428 & S.F. 492

This bill passed the Senate Welfare Committee on Wednesday, March 27. Senator Wayne Popham, Minneapolis, is the chief author.

APPROPRIATIONS

Unlike previous sessions, it is very difficult to get any idea of the status of appropriation measures. Legislators on the respective Appropriations and Finance Committees are keeping to themselves their intentions regarding appropriations for staffing and for the building program. There are several reports: 1) that the building bill of \$47 million will be reported out and recommended as submitted by the Building Interim Commission; 2) a conflicting report that it is unlikely that a building bill of this size will be recommended by the Finance and Appropriations Committees.

LEGISLATIVE MEETINGS

Members of the Minnesota ARC Governmental Affairs Steering Committee met with Repr. Douglas Head, chairman of the House Appropriations Committee's welfare sub-committee, to present the needs of the institutions for the retarded. The next step is to present similar information to the entire sub-committee. Presentations have been made to the Senate Finance Committee's sub-committee on buildings by Melvin Heckt **and** to the Senate Finance Committee's welfare sub-committee concerning staffing by Jerry Walsh.

NEW GOVERNOR TAKES OFFICE

It is expected that Governor Karl Rolvaag will make recommendations to improve the program for the retarded in his inaugural address before the joint meeting of the Senate and House. Lt. Gov. Sandy Keith has been visiting the various institutions for the mentally retarded and for the mentally ill and has been reporting his findings and feelings regarding the institutions to the public. Both Gov. Rolvaag and Lt. Gov. Keith have a very real interest in this program, as did former Governor Elmer L. Andersen.

MEETING WITH LEGISLATORS

It is not too early to be thinking of having your legislators speak to your Association meeting. This could be done at the May or June meeting, if the legislature is adjourned by then, or certainly at one of your first meetings this fall. I think it will be interesting to learn from your respective legislators their feelings regarding legislation which passes or fails to pass. I think they would also have some recommendations for future legislative sessions.

S.F. 1278 RELATES TO CLASSES AND TUITION FOR HANDICAPPED

This bill would make it possible for school districts to share in the cost of construction of rooms for special classes. At the present time, there is difficulty regarding this since the school district providing the class cannot charge a proportionate share of the cost of construction to other school districts that are making use of the special class facilities.

SHELTERED WORKSHOP AID - H.F. 1394

This bill would make it possible for counties to levy a tax for support of sheltered workshops and appropriate \$100,000 for state aid for workshops. This would be workshops for all types of handicapped.