

MINNESOTA ASSOCIATION FOR RETARDED CHILDREN, INC,

1963 LEGISLATIVE REPORT

Attached is a brief preliminary report of legislation passed this session which affects the mentally retarded. There are a number of people who have requested copies because they are going to make presentations to various groups.

Further analysis of the legislative results will be made; however, this will take several weeks. The attached is a good summary. If you have questions or wish additional information now, please let us know.

Melvin Heckt, Chairman
Governmental Affairs Committee

May 24, 1963

MINNESOTA ASSOCIATION FOR RETARDED CHILDREN, INC.

RESUME OF LEGISLATIVE ACTION

Institutions

STAFFING AT INSTITUTIONS

A total of 162.25 new positions for institutions for the retarded have been authorized by the 1963 session of the Minnesota Legislature. A majority of these positions have been allocated to Brainerd State School and Hospital (100.25) to meet their expanded needs because of new construction and the resulting increase in the number of residents they will be serving. Faribault State School and Hospital was granted an increase of 48 positions, the largest number in twelve years for them. However, even after the increases that have been granted, all three general institutions for the retarded in Minnesota remain below national averages in staff-patient ratios.

SUMMARY OF STAFF REQUESTS AND AUTHORIZATIONS

<u>Institution</u>	<u>1961 Rqst.</u>	<u>1961 Auth.</u>	<u>1963 Rqst.</u>	<u>1963 Auth.</u>
Brainerd (1)	132	81	256.25	100.25
Cambridge	150	7	201	12
Faribault	175	20 (2)	211	48
Owatonna	10	2	33	2

(1) Opening of new buildings account for majority of new positions.

(2) Fifteen additional positions were granted for expanded laundry services.

STAFF-PATIENT RATIOS AT GENERAL INSTITUTIONS

<u>Institution</u>	<u>Without New Positions</u>	<u>With New Positions</u>
Brainerd	1:4.3	1:4.3 (1)
Cambridge	1:3.6	1:3.5
Faribault	1:4.2	1:4.0
National Average	1:3.2	(2)

(1) Based on new admissions.

(2) Ratio is dropping with new staff increases elsewhere in country

BUILDINGS AT INSTITUTIONS

A considerable amount of improvement and expansion in physical plants will take place in the next two years because of legislation passed during the 1963 session.

The 1961 Legislature had authorized construction of four new dormitories (\$3,000,000) at Brainerd for expansion purposes and one dormitory (\$1,000,000) at Faribault as a replacement for outmoded facilities. Money was also authorized for a study of the food service system at Faribault. The entire 1961 Building Program of the state, except for planning, was halted by the problem of state debt limitation so construction could not begin. The 1961 Building Bill was re-enacted into law at the beginning of the 1963 session.

The regular 1963 Building Bill appropriated funds for the much needed Food Service and Handling Building (\$1,565,000) at Faribault and the School and Rehabilitation Therapies Building (\$1,170,000) at Brainerd. The Governor's Advisory Committee had asked that priority consideration be given to both items. No action was taken on the requests of Faribault, Brainerd, and Owatonna for new residential buildings. A total of \$2,970,000 for construction and rehabilitation of buildings at institutions for the retarded was included in the 1963 Building Bill.

SUMMARY OF MAJOR BUILDING REQUESTS AND AUTHORIZATIONS

<u>Institution</u>	<u>1961 Request</u>	<u>1961 Auth.</u>	<u>1963 Request</u>	<u>1963 Auth.</u>
Brainerd	8-Pnt Buildings Sch & Rehab Bldg	4-Pnt Bldgs	4-Pnt Bldgs Sch & Rehab Bldg	Sch & Rehab Bldg
Cambridge	Warehouse Rehab Center	No Major	Warehouse Major Cottage Repairs	Repairs to Cottages
Faribault	2-Pnt Bldgs Hosp Wing	1-Pnt Bldg	Food Svc Bldg 2-Pnt Bldgs Hosp Wing	Food Svc Bldg
Owatonna	Cottage Bldg	No Major	Cottage Bldg Service Bldg School Add'n.	No Major

DAY ACTIVITY CENTER LEGISLATION

In 1961, acting on a recommendation of the Interim Commission on the Problems of the Mentally Retarded, Handicapped, and Gifted (Children that benefits to the mentally retarded could be derived from encouraging community day activity center services, the Minnesota Legislature passed a pilot project daytime activity center statute to more clearly express and identify the need for such programs. It authorized the Department of Public Welfare to reimburse up to 50% of operating costs for selected centers. The funds allotted allowed for the establishment of nine pilot project centers.

Observing the success of the program and the widespread interest in additional centers throughout the state, the Governor's Advisory Committee on Mental Retardation and the Department of Public Welfare recommended that the 1963 Legislature increase substantially the appropriations for this activity. The Legislature, compromising on the recommendations of House and Senate Committees, set the appropriation for the biennium at \$155,000. Several other changes in the previous statute were established:

- 1) Payments will be made in advance by the state for approved programs rather than reimbursed.
- 2) Reasonable fees may be charged providing that no mentally retarded person will be denied participation because of inability to pay such a fee where previously no fees could be charged school-age children.
- 3) The responsibilities of the Board of Directors (formerly Advisory Board) of a Center are more clearly defined.
- 4) A ceiling has been placed on the amount of state funds to be made available to each county -- \$.25 per capita of county.

SUMMARY OF REQUESTS AND GRANTS FOR DAY ACTIVITY CENTERS

<u>Year</u>	<u>Request of DPW</u>	<u>Appropriation</u>
1961	\$ 70,000	\$ 36,000
1963	\$ 220,000	\$ 155,000

Resume of Legislative Action - Page 3

In addition to appropriations for buildings, staff, and day activity centers, a number of other legislative measures affecting the retarded were acted on by the 1963 Session.

OWATONNA STATE SCHOOL

A bill was passed that legally limits the age that students may attend the Owatonna State School to a maximum of 21 years and also eliminates the requirement that a child be under the legal guardianship of the Commissioner.

SPECIAL CLASSES

A bill was passed which allows a school district providing special classes to charge off as part of tuition to non-resident handicapped students an increased amount of the cost of building new facilities because of the fact that these non-resident students are in attendance. Previously, the amount of such construction costs that could be charged to the non-resident student was so limited that it threatened to cause school districts to exclude non-residents from participating in special classes for the handicapped.

DAY ACTIVITY CENTERS

The day activity center bill, mentioned in the first part of this report, was a most important bill and appropriates \$155,000. This bill provides that state matching funds can be distributed and that the authorization for this state participation for day activity center cost is on a permanent basis; it is no longer on a pilot basis.

ST. CLOUD ANNEX FOR DEFECTIVE DELINQUENTS

The bill passed which eliminates the St. Cloud Annex for Defective Delinquents as a part of the St. Cloud Reformatory. The population at this Annex was down to about 25. This Annex had had a capacity of 70. This law was passed primarily at the request of the Minnesota Bar Association, who maintained that it was illegal to confine people, who were not found guilty of specific crimes, in a prison setting. These people will be cared for at other institutions for the mentally retarded.

BILLS WHICH DID NOT PASS

A number of bills failed to get favorable action at this session of the legislature; however, groundwork was laid which might very well lead to their passage at the next session.

Increased special class aid. The bill to increase special class aid from \$3,600 to \$4,800 was acted on favorably by committees of the legislature but it was not passed out of the Appropriations and Finance Committees. The \$3,600 state aid per teacher was established in 1957 and, no doubt, it will be necessary to increase this amount in the future.

The bill for an Interim Commission on Mental Retardation did not pass. It will be possible, however, that the Governor might appoint another Advisory Committee on Mental Retardation or that a standing committee of the legislature will be able to study matters relating to mental retardation.

Resume of Legislative Action - Page 4

The bill to appropriate \$80,000 for three community living units for mentally retarded from institutions was passed by the Senate; however, it died in the Appropriations Committee of the House and there is some feeling that this might very well be acted on at the next session of the legislature.

The bill to provide that the state reimburse counties 50% for care of mentally retarded in boarding homes was not acted on at all by either the health and welfare committee of the House or the Senate welfare committee. This bill has been presented over a number of sessions and, although it is considered to be an important bill, it does not seem to get a great deal of consideration. It may be that more work will be needed on this measure and more study in the future.

SUMMARY

All in all, this looks like a very successful legislative session for the mentally retarded in Minnesota. When we consider that the legislature did not levy any specific new taxes and was only operating with increased amounts of money because of increased economy, the appropriations of money for staff, new buildings, and for the day activity center program certainly represent steps forward. This program certainly fared a great deal better than many other programs. This session of the legislature probably represents a turning point in the improvement of programs for the mentally retarded. There is now an increased awareness of the needs of the mentally retarded, due to the work of the Presidents Panel on Mental Retardation, the Governor's Advisory Committee on Mental Retardation, and the work of the Associations for Retarded Children. Another factor that is going to effect programs for the retarded is the fact that the institutions for the mentally ill have greatly decreased in population.