

January 30, 1959

Memorandum

To: Honorable Thomas C. Hennings, Jr., Chairman  
Committee on Rules and Administration

From: Honorable Lister Hill, Chairman  
Committee on Labor and Public Welfare

Re: S. Res. 65, Authorizing a comprehensive study of the  
problems of the aging

The Committee on Labor and Public Welfare in executive session on January 27, 1959, unanimously approved S. Res. 65, authorizing a complete study of any and all matters pertaining to the problems of the aging, including, but not limited to (a) a study of the labor problems of the aged, (b) a study of the existing programs of the aged, (c) a study of the present role of the Federal government in dealing with problems of the aged, and (d) a study of any additional Federal programs which should be undertaken to help solve the problems of the aged.

It is estimated that in order to carry out the provisions of this resolution, the Committee will need the sum of \$85,000 for the period between February 1, 1959 and January 31, 1960. A proposed budget is attached to this memorandum.

For the purpose of implementing this resolution, if it is approved, a Subcommittee on the Problems of the Aging and Aged has been established under the Chairmanship of Senator Pat McNamara of Michigan. The other Members of the Subcommittee are Senators John F. Kennedy of Massachusetts, Joseph S. Clark of Pennsylvania, Jennings Randolph of West Virginia, Everett McKinley Dirksen of Illinois, and Barry Goldwater of Arizona.

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Senator McNamara, Chairman of the Subcommittee on the Problems of the Aging and Aged, in presenting the resolution to the Committee, set forth in a memorandum the reasons for the proposed study. A copy of Senator McNamara's memorandum is attached hereto. The Members of the Committee were deeply impressed by the facts and figures set forth in Senator McNamara's memorandum and were in unanimous agreement that the study proposed should be undertaken.

Senator McNamara called attention to the fact that in 1955 the number of Americans aged 65 years was more than fifteen million, and he pointed out that by 1975 more than twenty million of our citizens will be over 65 years of age. He further stated that in more than half of our States at least eight percent of the population is 65 years of age or older.

Senator McNamara's memorandum also called attention to the "poverty which evidently accompanies the aging process", and cited statistics collected by this Committee in 1954 showing that one-third of all families whose head was over 65 had a cash income of less than \$2,000 a year, and that two-thirds of individuals over 65, living alone or with non-relatives, had a cash income of less than \$1,000 annually. He also laid stress on the inadequate medical care for the aging, and the problems of unemployment, proper housing, and diet.

In its conduct of the proposed study, the Subcommittee on the Problems of the Aging and Aged plans to (1) invite to the Capitol a number of recognized authorities in the field to constitute a panel which will assist the Subcommittee in laying down guide lines for the study; (2) to invite officials of the Federal agencies concerned with the welfare of older citizens to testify at public hearings; (3) to ask representatives of other organizations, public and private, to give testimony before the Subcommittee; and, (4) to hold a number of hearings in selected communities throughout the country where conditions are representative of the problems of the aging and aged.

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S. Res. 65 has provisions for the selection of one member of the staff of the Subcommittee by the Minority. The resolution also provides that the Committee shall report its findings and such recommendations as it deems advisable not later than January 31, 1960.

I wish to assure you and your colleagues that the budget for the proposed study has been drawn up carefully and conservatively. As is indicated by the Committee Print published by the Senate Committee on Rules and Administration entitled "Funds authorized and expended by Senate committees for inquiries and investigations", Page 10, the record of the Committee on Labor and Public Welfare in expenditures of funds authorized during the 83rd, 84th and 85th Congresses, should be a warranty that the funds requested under S. Res. 65 will be wisely administered.

On behalf of the Committee on Labor and Public Welfare, may I express the hope that your Committee will be able to give early consideration and take favorable action on this resolution.