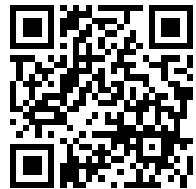

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MOBILES FOR CERTAIN DISABLED VETERANS

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HEARINGS
BEFORE THE
COMMITTEE ON COMPENSATION AND PENSIONS
OF THE
COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

EIGHTIETH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

ON

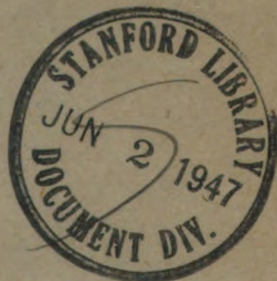
R. 289, H. R. 678, H. R. 1039, H. R. 1449, H. R. 1894,

H. R. 2741, and H. R. 2990

BILLS PROVIDING FOR THE PURCHASE OF
AUTOMOBILES OR OTHER CONVEYANCES
FOR CERTAIN DISABLED VETERANS

MAY 8, 1947

Printed for the use of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs



UNITED STATES
GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE
WASHINGTON : 1947



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**SUBCOMMITTEE ON COMPENSATION AND PENSIONS OF THE
COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS ..**

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AUTOMOBILES FOR CERTAIN DISABLED VETERANS

THURSDAY, MAY 8, 1947

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON COMPENSATION AND PENSIONS,
COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS,
• Washington, D. C.

The subcommittee met at 10 o'clock a. m., Hon. Frank A. Mathews, Jr. (chairman) presiding.

(The following bills were under consideration by the committee:)

[H. R. 289, 80th Cong., 1st sess.]

A BILL To authorize the payment by the Administrator of Veterans' Affairs of the purchase price of automobiles or other conveyances purchased by certain disabled veterans, and for other purposes

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the Administrator of Veterans' Affairs is authorized in the case of any veteran who is entitled to compensation under the laws administered by the Veterans' Administration by reason of disability incurred in or aggravated by active military or naval service due to the loss or permanent loss of use of one or both feet, or of one or both hands, or permanent blindness of both eyes with 5/200 visual acuity or less, to pay the total purchase price of a suitably equipped automobile or other conveyance which is being purchased by such veteran, not to exceed \$1,700, which amount shall be payable to the seller from whom the veteran is purchasing under sales agreement between the seller and the veteran: *Provided,* That only one such payment on the purchase price of an automobile or other conveyance shall be made for the benefit of any one veteran and no veteran who has received or shall receive an automobile or other conveyance at the expense of the Government pursuant to the appropriation provisions for the Veterans' Administration contained in the First Supplemental Appropriation Act, 1947, shall be eligible for the benefits of this Act: *And provided further,* That except for training the veteran in the use of such equipment, the Government shall have no liability respecting or in connection with the use, repair, maintenance, or replacement of such automobile or other conveyance.

SEC. 2. The Administrator of Veterans' Affairs is authorized to issue such rules and regulations as may be appropriate to accomplish the purposes of this Act.

[H. R. 678, 80th Cong., 1st sess.]

A BILL To authorize the Administrator of Veterans' Affairs to furnish funds for the purchase of an automobile by certain disabled veterans, and for other purposes

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That there shall be made available to any veteran of World War I and World War II having a service-incurred disability due to loss, or loss of use of, one or more limbs above the ankle joint, a credit not to exceed \$1,600 toward the purchase price of an automobile or other con-

veyance, which amount shall be payable to the seller of such automobile or other conveyance by the Veterans' Administration upon the submission to the Administrator of evidence as to the value of the automobile or other conveyance, the terms of the sales agreement, and evidence that a good title thereto will pass to the veteran: *Provided*, That nothing in this Act shall preclude any such veteran from obtaining this \$1,600 credit toward the purchase of an automobile or other conveyance the settlement price of which may exceed \$1,600.

SEC. 2. CONDITIONS.—(a) Neither the Veterans' Administration nor any other agency of the Government shall have any liability in connection with the operation, use, repair, maintenance, or replacement of said conveyance.

(b) Only one such payment under this Act toward the purchase price of a conveyance shall be made for the benefit of any one veteran; and any veteran who has obtained or shall obtain an automobile or other conveyance pursuant to Public Law 663, Seventy-ninth Congress, shall not be eligible for the benefits of this Act.

(c) The payment herein authorized to be made by the Administrator of Veterans' Affairs in connection with the purchase of an automobile or other conveyance by any veteran eligible under the terms of this Act shall not be made more than three years from the date of enactment hereof or from the date of the veteran's discharge from service in the armed forces of the United States, whichever is later.

SEC. 3. The Administrator of Veterans' Affairs is authorized to issue such rules and regulations as may be appropriate to accomplish the purpose of the Act.

SEC. 4. The penal provisions under Public Law 2, Seventy-third Congress, as amended, shall be applicable under this Act.

[H. R. 1039, 80th Cong., 1st sess.]

A BILL To authorize the payment by the Administrator of Veterans' Affairs of the purchase price of automobiles or other conveyances purchased by certain disabled veterans, and for other purposes

Whereas a survey conducted by the Disabled American Veterans reveals that approximately seventeen thousand veterans of World War II suffered amputations due to their war service, of whom two-thirds lost at least one foot and one-third lost at least one hand: Therefore

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the Administrator of Veterans' Affairs is authorized to provide an automobile or other conveyance, at a cost per vehicle or conveyance of not to exceed \$1,700, including equipment with such special attachments and devices as the Administrator may deem necessary, for each veteran of World War II who is entitled to compensation for the loss, or loss of use, of one or both arms or hands at or above the wrist, or for the loss, or loss of use, of one or both legs at or above the ankle, under the laws administered by the Veterans' Administration: *Provided*, That no part of the money shall be used for the repair, maintenance, or replacement of any such automobile or other conveyance and no veteran shall be given an automobile or other conveyance under the provisions of this Act until it is established to the satisfaction of the Administrator that such veteran will be able to operate such automobile or other conveyance in a manner consistent with his own safety and the safety of others and will be licensed to operate such automobile or other conveyance by the State of his residence or other proper licensing authority: *Provided further*, That under such regulations as the Administrator may prescribe the furnishing of such automobile or other conveyance shall be accomplished by the Administrator paying the total purchase price to the seller from whom the veteran is purchasing under sales agreement between the seller and the veteran.

[H. R. 1449, 80th Cong., 1st sess.]

A BILL To authorize the furnishing of especially equipped automobiles to amputees whose injury was incurred while on active service before World War II and who were not discharged until after December 7, 1941

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the paragraph under the heading "Veterans' Administration" in title I of the First Supplemental Appropriation Act, 1947, is amended by adding at the end thereof the following new sentence: "This paragraph shall apply to all otherwise entitled persons who suffered loss of or loss of use of one or both legs while on active duty in the armed forces of the United States between October 16, 1940, and December 7, 1941, and were not finally discharged until after December 7, 1941."

[H. R. 1894, 80th Cong., 1st sess.]

A BILL To authorize the furnishing of especially equipped automobiles and other conveyances to certain additional disabled veterans of World War II

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the paragraph under the heading "Veterans' Administration" in title I of the First Supplemental Appropriation Act, 1947, is amended by striking out "who is entitled to compensation for the loss, or loss of use, of one or both legs at or above the ankle under the laws administered by the Veterans' Administration" and inserting in lieu thereof "who is entitled, under the laws administered by the Veterans' Administration, to compensation for (1) the loss, or loss of use, of one or both legs at or above the ankle, or (2) the loss, or loss of use, of (A) a substantial portion of both feet and (B) one or both arms at or above the wrist".

[H. R. 2741, 80th Cong., 1st sess.]

A BILL To authorize payment by the Administrator of Veterans' Affairs on the purchase price of automobiles or other conveyances purchased by certain disabled veterans, and for other purposes

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That, subject to the conditions hereinafter set forth, the Administrator of Veterans' Affairs is authorized in the case of any veteran who is entitled to compensation under the laws administered by the Veterans' Administration by reason of disability incurred in or aggravated by active military or naval service due to one or more of the disabling conditions hereinafter specified to pay, not to exceed \$1,900, on the purchase price of a suitably equipped automobile or other conveyance which is being purchased by the veteran. Such disabilities are limited to the following:

(a) Loss of permanent loss of use of one or both legs, at or above the ankle;
 (b) Loss or permanent loss of use of one or both arms, at or above the wrist;
 (c) Permanent impairment of vision of both eyes of the following status: Central visual acuity of 20/200 or less in the better eye, with corrective glasses, or centralvisual acuity of more than 20/200 if there is a field defect in which the peripheral field has contracted to such an extent that the widest diameter of visual field subtends an angular distance no greater than twenty degrees in the better eye.

SEC. 2. The benefits of section 1 shall be granted under the following conditions:

(a) The Administrator shall make such payment on the purchase price to the seller from whom the veteran is purchasing under sales agreement between the seller and the veteran.

(b) The amount of the payment by the Administrator shall in no event exceed the purchase price of the automobile or other conveyance, including equipment with such special attachments and devices as the Administrator may deem necessary.

(c) Only one such payment under this Act on the purchase price of an automobile or other conveyance shall be made for the benefit of any one veteran. No veteran who has received or shall receive an automobile or other conveyance

at the expense of the Government pursuant to the appropriation provisions for the Veterans' Administration contained in the First Supplemental Appropriation Act, 1947, shall be eligible for the benefits of this Act.

(d) Neither the Veterans' Administration nor any other agency of the Government shall have any liability in connection with the operation, use, repair, maintenance, or replacement of such automobile or other conveyance.

Sec. 3. The Administrator of Veterans' Affairs is authorized to issue such rules and regulations as may be appropriate to accomplish the purposes of the Act.

[H. R. 2990, 80th Cong., 1st sess.]

A BILL To provide automobiles and other conveyances for disabled veterans

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the Administrator of Veterans' Affairs shall provide an automobile or other conveyance, at a cost per vehicle or conveyance of not to exceed \$1,600, including equipment with such special attachments and devices as the Administrator may deem necessary, for each veteran of World War I who is entitled to compensation for the anatomical loss or loss of use of one foot, or one hand, or of both feet or both hands, or of one foot and one hand, under laws administered by the Veterans' Administration: *Provided*, That no part of the money appropriated for this purpose shall be used for the repair, maintenance, or replacement of any such automobile or other conveyance and no veteran shall be given an automobile or other conveyance under the provisions of this Act until it is established to the satisfaction of the Administrator that such veteran will be able to operate such automobile or other conveyance in a manner consistent with his own safety and the safety of others and will be licensed to operate such automobile or other conveyance by the State of his residence or other proper licensing authority: *Provided further*, That under such regulations as the Administrator may prescribe the furnishing of such automobile or other conveyance shall be accomplished by the Administrator paying the total purchase price to the seller from whom the veteran is purchasing under sales agreement between the seller and the veteran.

Mr. MATHEWS. The meeting of the Subcommittee on Compensation and Pensions of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House will please come to order.

This hearing has been scheduled so that any additional testimony may be heard that someone might desire to present to the committee with relation to, particularly, H. R. 2741, but generally to the various proposals which have been introduced by different bills on the extension of the supplying of automobiles to disabled veterans.

General Bradley is here, and if there is no objection upon the part of the committee, I think we should hear the general first, as he is a busy man and probably wants to get away.

I might say in passing, according to my calculation, this is VE-day, and I think it is a very appropriate day on which to hold this hearing.

General Bradley, if you care to come forward now, we will be glad to hear you.

STATEMENT OF GEN. OMAR N. BRADLEY, ADMINISTRATOR OF
VETERANS' AFFAIRS

General BRADLEY. Mr. Chairman, I have a prepared statement which I will present, if that is in accordance with your desires.

Mr. MATHEWS. If it is agreeable to the general and to the members of the committee, we will allow the general to insert the statement in

the record, and the committee may ask any questions of the general that they may desire.

Is that agreeable, general, or would you prefer to present your statement first?

General BRADLEY. I think it would be helpful if I would present the statement. It is not too long.

Mr. MATHEWS. All right.

General BRADLEY. The last session of Congress voted to provide automobiles for those disabled veterans of World War II whose injuries to their legs seriously restricted their travels. You now have before you several bills which would also grant automobiles to another and broader group of disabled veterans from all previous wars and the peacetime service.

In seeking to determine the desirability of these new proposals, I have limited my judgment to the value of automobiles in the sound and successful rehabilitation of disabled veterans. I believe this is the only reasonable yardstick that can be applied to any of these bills. We are not involved in a question of what the veteran does or does not deserve. If we sought to justify this grant on the basis of our debt to disabled veterans, we could add a garage, a house, and furniture—and still fall pathetically far short of payment. For there is no adequate reward that can repay a man for the loss of an arm, a leg, or his health.

The primary responsibility of our Government toward disabled veterans is to heal them during their convalescence, to guide them in training, and to help them in finding normal, useful, and remunerative lives. If it is shown that the grant of automobiles is vital to the successful rehabilitation of these disabled men, then it can be urged we have reason to provide them.

On the other hand, if this grant is to be viewed as a token of the Nation's debt, then we must question the soundness of these proposals. I bear in mind that it is far easier to support these bills than to oppose them. And I recognize that any proposal which would benefit the veteran directly is not easily disputed by logic and by reason.

Even the cost of these proposals is of secondary importance. For while the cost is substantial, it nevertheless amounts to only a bare fractional part of our total expenditure for veterans. And where the particular needs of seriously disabled veterans are concerned, those needs should not be measured in terms of what they cost.

In examining these bills, we must first concern ourselves with the principles of their proposals. In light of the objectives of our program, we must determine whether they will contribute soundly and equitably to the rehabilitation and welfare of disabled veterans.

If this then is to be the basis of our judgment, let us first consider the objectives and character of Government aid to disabled veterans.

Where an injury has impaired the employability of a veteran, we have sought to restore his usefulness by helping him to conquer his handicap and find self-confidence in a promising and productive job. This is the process known as rehabilitation. It is normally accomplished through three distinct but integral programs.

The first is medical care and hospitalization. We do not release a veteran for return to his community until first we have exhausted our medical resources in his treatment. After discharge and throughout his entire lifetime, we provide facilities for expert medical care and hospitalization. Where prosthetic appliances are required, we not only pay the cost of that equipment, but we assume responsibility for its maintenance and replacement as long as the veteran lives.

The second is vocational training. We seek to fit these men to occupations and careers where their injuries will be least disabling and their handicaps least confining. We not only assist the veteran in defining his job objective, but we bear the cost of his training, including subsistence during that time.

The third is compensation. In addition to helping sustain the disabled veteran during his period of training, we continue to pay him compensation afterward to help offset his possible loss of earning power. The rates of compensation are, furthermore, increased to defray extra costs of their special needs. Blind and paralytic veterans, for instance, and veterans suffering from amputations are paid compensation at rates which presumably enable them to afford the extra services they require.

In voting Public Law 663, the Seventy-ninth Congress apparently determined that this rehabilitation program did not fully satisfy the peculiar needs of those veterans who had suffered permanent disabling leg injuries in World War II. By the provisions of that law, Congress authorized the Government to pay for vehicles purchased by that group of disabled veterans. The group was limited to those who were receiving compensation for the loss, or loss of use, of one or both legs at or above the ankle.

It specified that the cost per vehicle was not to exceed \$1,600. It did not permit partial payment by the Government on vehicles costing more than \$1,600. And although \$30,000,000 was appropriated for those purchases, no provision was made to obligate those funds beyond June 30, 1947.

Unfortunately, no provision was made to extend the benefits of that law to those disabled veterans whose injuries prevented their release before that time from Army and Navy hospitals.

In limiting automobiles to those veterans whose leg injuries seriously impaired their freedom of travel, Congress indicated that it regarded those vehicles as prosthetic appliances. This conclusion is substantiated in the requirement that veterans eligible for vehicles be also eligible for licenses to operate those vehicles themselves.

The fact that no provision was made for replacement, furthermore, suggests that Congress looked on these vehicles as temporary prosthetic appliances to be furnished veterans only during their period of rehabilitation. In restricting the grant to veterans of World War II, and in then limiting the grant to a single year, Congress would appear to have underscored its intent that those vehicles be provided to aid the disabled veteran in his rehabilitation.

This emphasis on the need for travel aids to assist in the rehabilitation of veterans who have suffered leg injuries in World War II certainly would not seem to justify the grant of additional vehicles to other disabled veterans of this and previous wars. If we accept the fact that this initial grant of vehicles contributed to the sound and

successful rehabilitation of World War II disabled veterans, we shall find it difficult to apply the same yardstick to those new proposals which would, among other things, grant automobiles to veterans who lost their arms or legs from 25 to almost 50 years ago.

It may be helpful at this point to insert in your record the report of the Veterans' Administration on the following bills: H. R. 289, H. R. 678, H. R. 1039, H. R. 1449, H. R. 1894, and H. R. 2741. Each of these bills would provide changes in the present law. The report is as follows:

VETERANS' ADMINISTRATION,
Washington 25, D. C., April 16, 1947.

HON. EDITH NOURSE ROGERS,
*Chairman, Committee on Veterans' Affairs,
House of Representatives, Washington 25, D. C.*

DEAR MRS. ROGERS: This is in further reply to your letter of February 21, 1947, requesting a report on H. R. 289, Eightieth Congress, a bill to authorize the payment by the Administrator of Veterans' Affairs of the purchase price of automobiles or other conveyances purchased by certain disabled veterans, and for other purposes, and H. R. 678, Eightieth Congress, a bill to authorize the Administrator of Veterans' Affairs to furnish funds for the purchase of an automobile by certain disabled veterans, and for other purposes. You also requested that the report cover the variances from H. R. 289 and H. R. 678, as contained in the following bills:

H. R. 1039, a bill to authorize the payment by the Administrator of Veterans' Affairs of the purchase price of automobiles or other conveyances purchased by certain disabled veterans, and for other purposes.

H. R. 1449, a bill to authorize the furnishing of especially equipped automobiles to amputees whose injury was incurred while on active service before World War II and who were not discharged until after December 7, 1941.

H. R. 1894, a bill to authorize the furnishing of especially equipped automobiles and other conveyances to certain additional disabled veterans of World War II.

This report is likewise in response to your letter of March 25, 1947, requesting a report on H. R. 2741, a bill to authorize payment by the Administrator of Veterans' Affairs on the purchase price of automobiles or other conveyances purchased by certain disabled veterans, and for other purposes.

The general purposes of the foregoing bills are to provide liberalizations of the present law, which is hereinafter quoted, with respect to the subject of automobiles or other conveyances for certain classes of disabled veterans. Among the varying changes proposed by the bills are (1) to extend the benefit to the cases of service-incurred blindness and disabilities of the upper limbs, (2) to raise the amount of the Government's payment on a conveyance to amounts exceeding \$1,600, (3) to provide that payment not to exceed a stated sum may be made by the Government on the purchase price of a vehicle costing in excess of such amount, (4) to include veterans of all wars and peacetime veterans, (5) to dispense with the requirement that the veteran be qualified and properly licensed to operate the vehicle, and (6) to require that the veteran be furnished training for the operation of the conveyance. The existing authorization on this matter is contained in the First Supplemental Appropriation Act, 1947, Public Law No. 663, Seventy-ninth Congress, approved August 8, 1946, which in pertinent part reads as follows:

Automobiles and other conveyances for disabled veterans: To enable the Administrator of Veterans' Affairs to provide an automobile or other conveyance, at a cost per vehicle or conveyance of not to exceed \$1,600, including equipment with such special attachments and devices as the Administrator may deem necessary, for each veteran of World War II who is entitled to compensation for the loss, or loss of use, of one or both legs at or above the ankle under the laws administered by the Veterans' Administration, \$30,000,000: *Provided*, That no part of the money appropriated by this paragraph shall be used for the repair, maintenance, or replacement of any such automobile or other conveyance and no veteran shall be given an automobile or other conveyance under the provisions of this paragraph until it is established to the satisfaction of the Administrator that such veteran will be able to operate such automobile or other conveyance in a manner consistent with his own safety and the safety of others and will be licensed to operate such automobile or other conveyance by the State of his residence or other proper licensing authority: *Provided further*, That under such regulations as the Administrator may prescribe the furnishing of such automobile or other conveyance shall be accomplished by the Administrator paying the total purchase price to the seller from whom the veteran is purchasing under sales agreement between the seller and the veteran.

There accompanies this report a chart from which a comparison of the principal features of the several bills may be easily ascertained. The bills will be separately discussed, giving emphasis as requested to H. R. 289 and H. R. 678.

Under date of May 22, 1946, the Veterans' Administration submitted an adverse report to the Committee on World War Veterans' Legislation, House of Representatives, Seventy-ninth Congress, on several bills then pending before the committee which were similar in some respects to the bills now under consideration, particularly with respect to the inclusion of disabilities of the upper limbs and availability of the benefit to all peacetime and wartime veterans. That report was printed (No. 161, May 22, 1946). On May 29, 1946, the Administrator appeared before the committee and supplemented the report by an oral statement on various aspects of the legislation. Upon further consideration the committee reported favorably a new and materially different bill, H. R. 7171, Seventy-ninth Congress (Rept. No. 2689, 79th Cong., 2d sess.), which would have authorized payment of the purchase price of the conveyance, not to exceed \$1,500, only in the case of service-connected disability in World War II due to the loss of one or both legs at or above the knee joint, or the loss of use of one or both legs. This bill was not enacted, and the somewhat more liberal provisions, quoted above, covering World War II veterans disabled by loss, or loss of use, of one or both legs at or above the ankle, were enacted as a part of the First Supplemental Appropriation Act, 1947, as incorporated in that act by amendment to House Joint Resolution 390, Seventy-ninth Congress, which amendment originated in the Senate, was revised in certain particulars in the House of Representatives, and agreed to by the Senate.

H. R. 289

(A) PURPOSES

As a permanent independent measure, H. R. 289 would effect a broad extension of the existing authorization contained in Public Law 663, Seventy-ninth Congress. The principal new provisions of the bill would involve:

(1) The addition of two new classes of disabilities, cases of permanent blindness of both eyes (5/200 or less visual acuity) and of loss,

or loss of use, of one or both hands. Moreover, "loss, or permanent loss of use of one or both feet" would replace the existing classification of "loss, or loss of use of one or both legs at or above the ankle."

(2) Inclusion of all veterans, whether of wartime or peacetime service.

(3) Increase of the maximum cost of the conveyance to be defrayed by the Government from \$1,600 to \$1,700.

(4) Training of the veteran by the Veterans' Administration, where necessary, in the use of equipment.

(B) GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

Liberal benefits are now provided for disabled veterans covered by the bill. The Veterans' Administration is authorized to furnish veterans in need thereof, by reason of service-connected disabilities, such supplies, prosthetic appliances, wheelchairs, artificial limbs, and similar appliances as may be reasonable and necessary in appropriate cases. These veterans may likewise be furnished fitting and training, including institutional training, in the use of such appliances. Blind veterans entitled to disability compensation under laws administered by the Veterans' Administration may be furnished seeing-eye or guide dogs and mechanical electronic equipment for aiding them in overcoming their physical handicap. In addition to prosthetic appliances and other artificial or mechanical aids, veterans with disabilities of the character under consideration have been given special recognition in the matter of compensation rates. The increased wartime rates range as high as \$318 monthly, which is payable where the disability involves the anatomical loss of two extremities so near the shoulder or hip as to prevent the use of a prosthetic appliance, or the anatomical loss of both eyes. Where there is a combination of disabilities the wartime rate may be as high as \$360 monthly. The comparable peacetime rates range as high as \$238.50 monthly and \$270 monthly. The extent of the special rates may be realized when they are compared to the normal rate of \$138 per month for wartime service-connected total disability and \$103.50 a month for peacetime service-connected total disability.

Under Public Law 16, Seventy-eighth Congress, approved March 24, 1943, as amended, veterans of World War II are likewise entitled to vocational rehabilitation training where needed to overcome the handicap of disability incurred in or aggravated by service on or after September 16, 1940, and prior to the termination of the war.

While there is a natural tendency to view with favor any proposal calculated to express the universal sympathy which exists for those who have suffered severe physical losses in their country's service, this matter cannot be considered in isolation from the welfare of veterans generally and the reasonable obligations of the Government to veterans as a whole. Experience strongly supports the established concept that the most practicable and equitable general method of providing for the continuing needs of seriously disabled veterans is regular monthly payment of compensation. It would seem manifestly unwise to inaugurate a legislative policy which by logical progression, and in order to avoid discrimination, might ultimately demand that all seriously disabled veterans be supplied with automobiles in addition to compensation and other benefits. A sound approach to this problem

requires that any proposal to extend the present law to additional selected classes of disabled veterans be carefully examined to ascertain whether the necessities of those to be benefited are peculiar and urgent in relation to the benefit proposed.

Limitations contained in the present law, which confine the eligible class to veterans of World War II entitled to compensation for the loss, or loss of use, of one or both legs at or above the ankle, suggest that the basic purpose was to provide rehabilitative assistance to returning veterans who have sustained a material impairment of mobility by injuries to the lower limbs. The requirement of an operator's license also suggests a purpose that the conveyance be regarded as something in the nature of an additional prosthetic appliance for the direct use of the veteran.

Against the foregoing background specific features of H. R. 289 will now be considered under appropriate topical headings.

(C) DISABILITIES INVOLVING HANDS AND ARMS

The problem of mobility is not present to a serious degree where veterans have sustained disabilities due to the loss, or loss of use, of one or both of the upper limbs. They can move about with relative ease, despite some difficulties which may occasionally occur in crowds. Many other veterans with service-connected conditions not involving the loss of a member, and who would not be eligible under the bill, are more gravely affected in their ability to travel.

It is arguable that the operation of an automobile would contribute to the restoration of normal self-confidence in veterans of this class. However, there are many other available methods for accomplishing the same result, particularly in connection with the process of physical rehabilitation training available to such veterans, and the vocational rehabilitation training which disabled veterans of World War II are now eligible to receive. Furthermore, some veterans in this category would be qualified under the bill but, being unable to drive, could not derive the same psychological stabilization which might be supposed to flow from the operation of the vehicle.

There appears to be little justification for concluding that veterans with disabilities affecting the hands and arms have a distinctive claim to the kind of benefit which this legislation would provide.

(D) BLINDED VETERANS

Veterans who have lost their vision are the objects of a strong national sympathy and a desire to do everything possible to better their condition. Nevertheless, it remains a fact that the ultimate welfare of such veterans is best served by their fullest possible development of a sense of self-reliance. Liberal provisions giving them a considerable measure of economic independence have already been made in the form of monthly compensation rates approximately twice the normal rates payable to other totally disabled veterans. Guide dogs and mechanical aids for their own operation are provided where appropriate. Many of them are given vocational training from which they develop substantial earning power.

In view of these facts it is open to serious question whether the development of initiative and self-reliance might not be retarded by

providing, in addition to the many other benefits now available to blind veterans, free automobiles which must be operated by others. Moreover, there would seem to be little purpose in encouraging the blinded veteran to become habituated to his own automobile as a primary means of transportation without also providing allowances for the hiring of drivers and periodic replacements of the conveyance when required. No such provisions are made by the bill and for sound reasons of policy, such provisions would not be feasible.

Many other disabled veterans, such as those with serious heart and lung conditions, are as handicapped in the matter of self-transportation as those who would be benefited by the bill.

Upon a consideration of the practical interests of blinded veterans and their relative status among disabled veterans generally, it is believed that this feature of the proposed bill would be unwise in principle and discriminatory against many disabled veterans not covered thereby.

(E) INCLUSION OF ALL PEACETIME AND WARTIME VETERANS

H. R. 289 would embrace veterans of any period of service, without regard to whether the disability was incurred in wartime or peacetime. The cost of only one vehicle would be provided, which would last but a comparatively short time. Both the present law and the bill appear, therefore, to be based, in part, on the theory that all veterans with the specified disabilities have a particular need for an automobile as a part of their process of rehabilitation and readjustment to civilian life and that it should be temporarily supplied at Government expense.

This theory has less validity when applied to disabled veterans of wars previous to World War II and to veterans who were disabled in previous peacetime service. Their readjustment and rehabilitation problems, both psychological and economic, have already been met and largely solved. With reference to the application of the bill to persons who are hereafter disabled in peacetime service, as well as those heretofore so disabled, it is noteworthy that this benefit is geared to disabling conditions which in most instances result from the extra hazards of war. The Congress heretofore has always given substantial preference to wartime veterans in both the matter of increased disability compensation rates and the conferment of special types of gratuities.

In view of the unprecedented character of this new type of assistance to selected groups of disabled veterans and the policy considerations which demand that it be confined to those having a strong need for the particular type of benefit proposed, it is felt that such benefit should not be allowed to become more than the temporary expedient now provided in favor of the group of veterans most immediately affected—those disabled in World War II.

(F) COST OF VEHICLE

The bill would authorize the payment of as much as \$1,700 covering the total cost of a suitably equipped conveyance, as compared to the maximum of \$1,600 under the present law. There are several established and desirable makes of automobiles in the low-price field

which may be purchased with special driving controls within the \$1,600 ceiling presently prescribed. While it is true that the average price of automobiles has increased \$100 or more since the enactment of Public Law 663, there appears to be no sound reason for adding to the Government's obligation when adequate vehicles can be purchased within the existing cost limitation.

Some difficulties have heretofore been experienced by veterans in readily obtaining automobiles at a price of \$1,600 or less, particularly in localities remote from the factory, to which shipments involve high transportation charges. However, it is believed that low-priced cars will become increasingly available in all sections of the country as time goes on. Experience under the present law generally indicates that qualified veterans have been able to obtain suitable conveyances within a reasonable time after they were certified as eligible. As of February 28, 1947, 13,795 World War II veterans had been certified as eligible, by reason of their disabilities, to purchase conveyances at the cost of the Government. Of these, 8,611 had actually been delivered conveyances in transactions approved for payment by the Veterans' Administration. Others have entered into sales agreements which have not been fully consummated. In view of the fact that the veteran ordinarily makes arrangements for purchasing after his application for eligibility has been approved and the further fact that the sales agreement must subsequently be approved by the Veterans' Administration, these figures indicate that no great difficulty has been encountered in procuring vehicles at or under the cost ceiling.

(G) TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

The bill provides that "except for training the veteran in the use of such equipment, the Government shall have no liability respecting or in connection with the use, repair, maintenance, or replacement of such automobile or other conveyance." This would appear to obligate the Veterans' Administration to provide training for the veteran, where necessary to qualify him to operate the conveyance. As a practical matter, and in the light of experience under the existing law, it is believed that the great majority of those covered by the bill, who propose to operate the conveyance, will have already received adequate training as drivers, either in the process of their hospitalization, or by private training in their own home localities. The few who might not have received such training could probably acquire the same at little or no expense to themselves. In view of these facts, it is deemed inadvisable to require the Veterans' Administration to set up throughout the country the additional procedures, with trained personnel, necessary for providing such training.

(H) OPERATION OF VEHICLE

Unlike Public Law 663, the bill would not require ability to operate the vehicle. As heretofore indicated the omission of this requirement would remove one of the basic limitations which serve as justification for confining this kind of benefit to a selected disabled group. Should H. R. 289 be enacted, it may reasonably be expected that thousands of equally or more severely handicapped veterans, not included, would feel that they had been unduly discriminated against and would be inspired to press for further expansion.

The Veterans' Administration would not favor legislation in this field which dispenses with the existing requirements relative to the operation of the conveyance.

ESTIMATED COST OF H. R. 289

The Veterans' Administration has been unable to obtain data indicating how many additional veterans of World War II who might qualify for a vehicle under the bill, if enacted, are still in Army and Navy hospitals, or how many may be receiving benefits administered by the service departments. However, based on the number of veterans receiving service-connected benefits administered by the Veterans' Administration, and excluding those World War II veterans eligible under Public Law 663, Seventy-ninth Congress, it is estimated that approximately 12,900 veterans might presently qualify for benefits under the bill. This number is composed of 6,100 additional veterans of World War II, 5,700 veterans of World War I, 1,000 veterans of the Regular Establishment, and 100 veterans of the Spanish-American War. If each of these veterans qualified for the full allowance of \$1,700 per vehicle, the aggregate additional cost to the Government of this bill would be \$21,930,000. Of necessity this estimate is restricted to present cost and would, of course, be increased to the extent that persons disabled in service subsequent to the enactment of the bill might qualify for benefits thereunder.

H. R. 678

(A) PURPOSES

H. R. 678, if enacted, would make available to any veteran of World War I and World War II, having a service-incurred disability due to loss, or loss of use, of "one or more limbs above the ankle joint" a credit of not to exceed \$1,600 toward the purchase price of an automobile or other conveyance. The bill would expressly provide that any such veteran might procure a conveyance exceeding \$1,600 in price, but the Government's obligation would be limited to a maximum of \$1,600 for application on such purchase price. The bill also provides that the authorized payment by the Administrator of Veterans' Affairs on the purchase price of a conveyance shall not be made more than 3 years from enactment of the bill or from the date of the veteran's discharge, whichever is the later. The bill is not expressly limited to veterans entitled to compensation under laws administered by the Veterans' Administration, nor does it make any express reference to special equipment or attachments which may be necessary to enable the veteran to operate the conveyance. Neither does it require that the veteran be a qualified operator of the vehicle. Section 4 of the bill would make the penal provisions under Public Law 2, Seventy-third Congress, as amended, applicable under this enactment.

(B) DISABILITIES COVERED

The descriptive language "the loss, or loss of use, of one or more limbs above the ankle joint" is subject to the possible construction that it is intended to include the upper limbs as well as the legs. If the bill is intended to have this effect it is objectionable on the grounds

heretofore urged in connection with H. R. 289 with respect to the inclusion of disabilities involving the upper extremities. If this is not intended and the bill is further considered it should be appropriately clarified.

The absence of a requirement that the disability be such as to entitle the veteran to compensation under laws administered by the Veterans' Administration, leaves it without any provision respecting the nature of the veteran's discharge from the service. Generally speaking, entitlement to compensation can exist only where the veteran has been discharged under other than dishonorable conditions. There is no sound basis for granting the proposed benefit to veterans whose discharges would disqualify them to receive compensation.

(C) INCLUSION OF WORLD WAR I VETERANS

A primary purpose of the bill appears to be the extension of the proposed benefit to World War I veterans, who are not covered by existing provisions. The reasons which impel the Veterans' Administration to view such an extension unfavorably have heretofore been stated in connection with the analysis of H. R. 289 and are not repeated here.

(D) COST OF VEHICLE

The bill proposes a variation of existing law by the provisions authorizing the purchase of an automobile or conveyance at a price exceeding \$1,600, with the Government's obligation limited to the amount of \$1,600.

In view of the fact that veterans have not in every instance been able to obtain promptly automobiles costing \$1,600 or less, the Veterans' Administration would view with favor a provision of this character for application to the disabled World War II class included under the present law. In this connection it is recommended that consideration be given to the enactment of permanent legislation similar to the present provisions of Public Law 663, Seventy-ninth Congress, revised to authorize the payment by the Administrator of a maximum of \$1,600 on the purchase price of a vehicle costing more. Without detailing the precise form which such legislation should take, it may be suggested that it should be limited to veterans entitled to compensation under the laws administered by the Veterans' Administration by reason of disability incurred in or aggravated by active service in World War II due to the loss, or permanent loss of use, of one or both legs at or above the ankle; that it should authorize the payment by the Administrator of Veterans' Affairs of not to exceed \$1,600 on the purchase price of a conveyance, with necessary attachments, which is being purchased by the veteran himself, without any limitation on the total purchase price; that a reasonable time from the date of enactment or date of discharge of the veteran, whichever is the later, be prescribed within which the benefit must be obtained; and that it should specifically exclude persons who have received conveyances pursuant to Public Law 663, Seventy ninth Congress. Permanent legislation of this character, if enacted, would serve the further desirable purpose of making the benefit available to veterans of World War II, otherwise eligible, who will not be able to qualify under existing law because they will not have been discharged from Army or Navy hospitals by June 30, 1947. Such persons should not

be deprived of the right to obtain a vehicle at Government expense by the mere fact that they will not be discharged from the service until after the effective period of the present law. There will probably be few in this additional group, and it is believed that the increased cost to the Government would be relatively small.

The failure of H. R. 678 expressly to provide that the amount to be paid by the Government may include the cost of necessary equipment might result in a conclusion that necessary attachments, such as driving controls required by the veteran, may not be considered. The bill requires clarification in this particular.

(E) OPERATION OF THE VEHICLE

Like H. R. 289, H. R. 678 contains no requirement that the recipient shall be able to operate the vehicle. This matter has been discussed in connection with the first-mentioned bill and will not be repeated here.

(F) MISCELLANEOUS

H. R. 678 would provide a time limit of 3 years from its enactment or from the date of the veteran's discharge, whichever is the later, within which the payment authorized might be accomplished. The principle of limiting the time within which the benefit may be acquired is considered sound. The bill would further provide that the penal provisions under Public Law 2, Seventy-third Congress, as amended, should be applicable. In accordance with similar provisions contained in recently enacted legislation affecting veterans, such as the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944, as amended (sec. 1500), this provision is likewise considered to be a desirable one.

ESTIMATED COST OF H. R. 678

For purposes of estimating the cost of the bill, it is assumed that its coverage is intended to extend only to veterans disabled by the loss, or loss of use, of one or both legs above the ankle joint. It is estimated that approximately 3,400 veterans of World War I who are receiving service-connected benefits due to this type of disability might qualify for the benefits of the bill and that an additional 100 veterans of World War II might qualify thereunder because of not being required, as under the present law, to operate the vehicle. To provide conveyances for this number at the full allowance of \$1,600 would cost approximately \$5,600,000. This estimate does not take into consideration the indeterminate number of additional veterans of World War II who might qualify under the bill but who are not receiving benefits from the Veterans' Administration.

H. R. 1039

The detailed variations contained in this bill are briefed in the accompanying chart, to which reference is made. In its essential features the bill is like the present law except that the maximum cost of the conveyance to be paid by the Government would be increased to \$1,700 and the disabled class would include veterans of World War II entitled to compensation for the loss, or loss of use, of one or both arms or hands at or above the wrist. In addition, the bill would be

in the nature of permanent legislation, without any limitation upon the time within which the benefit might be obtained.

Reference is made to the conclusions stated in the discussion under H. R. 289, *supra*, with respect to the increased cost authorization and the inclusion of cases involving the loss, or loss of use, of the upper limbs. These conclusions and the principles upon which they are based are equally applicable here.

While the bill provides that there shall be no replacement of the conveyance, it does not expressly exclude from eligibility those who have received vehicles pursuant to Public Law 663, Seventy-ninth Congress. If the bill is given further consideration, it is suggested that it be expressly clarified in this particular.

The increased cost to the Government by reason of the enactment of this measure would be substantially represented by the number of veterans of World War II who might qualify on account of the loss, or loss of use, of one or both arms or hands at or above the wrist. Basing the estimate upon the number of World War II veterans who are receiving benefits administered by the Veterans' Administration for disabilities of this character, there are approximately 5,300 persons who might qualify, with a resulting potential cost on account of this group in the approximate amount of \$9,010,000. This estimate does not take into account veterans who are still in Army and Navy hospitals or who may be receiving retirement benefits from the service departments, as to which groups it has been impossible to obtain data indicating the number who would qualify for the benefits of the bill.

H. R. 1449

This bill, if enacted, would merely amend Public Law 663, Seventy-ninth Congress, to extend entitlement to persons otherwise entitled thereunder who suffered the loss or loss of use of one or both legs while on active duty in the armed forces between October 16, 1940, and December 7, 1941, and who were not discharged until after the latter date.

For reasons indicated in connection with the consideration of H. R. 289, *supra*, it is considered inadvisable to extend legislation on this subject to persons who incurred the required disability during peacetime service. There appears to exist no sound reason for making an exception based upon the fortuitous circumstance that the individual, though injured prior to the outbreak of World War II, was not finally discharged until after December 7, 1941.

It is estimated that there are approximately 50 veterans on the compensation rolls of the Veterans' Administration who were not discharged until after December 7, 1941, and who suffered the loss, or loss of use, of one or both legs at or above the ankle prior to that date. If it be assumed that all of these veterans incurred their disability subsequent to October 16, 1940, and could otherwise qualify under Public Law 663, Seventy-ninth Congress, the estimated cost of the bill would be approximately \$80,000.

H. R. 1894

This bill would amend the existing provisions of Public Law 663, *supra*, by striking the words "who is entitled to compensation for the loss, or loss of use, of one or both legs at or above the ankle under the

laws administered by the Veterans' Administration" and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

who is entitled, under the laws administered by the Veterans' Administration, to compensation for (1) the loss, or loss of use, of one or both legs at or above the ankle, or (2) the loss, or loss of use, of (A) a substantial portion of both feet and (B) one or both arms at or above the wrist.

The bill would, therefore, add to the class presently eligible, those World War II veterans entitled to compensation by reason of the disability described in (2), last quoted above. This provision is somewhat confusing, but construed literally it would seem to require a combination of the loss, or loss of use, of both a substantial portion of the feet and one or both arms at or above the wrist. The administration of such a provision would be exceedingly difficult because of its lack of exactitude, particularly in respect to what cases would be comprehended by the loss, or loss of use, of "a substantial portion of both feet." For this reason the bill, if enacted, would be extremely impracticable.

The principles considered in the preceding discussion of other bills are applicable in support of the conclusion that this proposal represents an undesirable extension of the existing law.

Because of the indefinite nature of the new disabilities which would be brought in by the bill, it is impossible to submit any worth-while estimate of the cost thereof.

H. R. 2741

With the exceptions of the disabilities covered, the amount and extent of the Government's payment on a vehicle, and the matter of training the veteran, this bill is similar to H. R. 289. The disabilities specified in H. R. 2741 would consist of the following:

(a) Loss or permanent loss of use of one or both legs, at or above the ankle.

(b) Loss or permanent loss of use of one or both arms, at or above the wrist.

(c) Permanent impairment of vision of both eyes of the following status: Central visual acuity of 20/200 or less in the better eye, with corrective glasses, or central visual acuity of more than 20/200 if there is a field defect in which the peripheral field has contracted to such an extent that the widest diameter of visual field subtends an angular distance no greater than 20 degrees in the better eye.

Instead of \$1,700 authorized by H. R. 289 to be paid as the total purchase price of a conveyance, H. R. 2741 would authorize the payment of not to exceed \$1,900 on the purchase price, without any requirement that this amount represent the total purchase price. Unlike H. R. 289, the bill contains no requirement that the Veterans' Administration train the veteran in the use of the vehicle.

The first two disability classifications set forth in (a) and (b) above are slightly more restrictive than similar categories in H. R. 289, in that the loss, or loss of use, of one or both legs or arms would be limited to such loss at or above the ankle and at or above the wrist, respectively.

For the reasons heretofore assigned in the discussion of H. R. 289, this bill is considered to be unsound in extending the benefit to veterans other than those disabled in World War II, and to persons with disa-

bilities of the upper extremities and defects of vision. It is also objectionable, on grounds heretofore indicated, by reason of the increase of the amount to be paid by the Government on the purchase price of a conveyance from \$1,600, as provided in the present law, to \$1,900.

Moreover, the criterion for eligibility based on service-connected visual defects would have a more extensive application than that contained in H. R. 289. Veterans with 5/200 visual acuity or less in both eyes are rated totally disabled for compensation purposes and are entitled to special rates of payment. However, the expanded definition of visual impairment set forth in H. R. 2741 would include a substantial number who are awarded compensation based on a rating of less than 100 percent, and who can see well enough to move about with reasonable safety and rapidity. It would, therefore, be incongruous for the Government to provide the purchase price of automobiles in such cases.

Reference is made to the cost estimate submitted on H. R. 289. The estimate of 12,900 veterans, based upon the number now receiving benefits from the Veterans' Administration alone and not including the World War II group eligible under Public Law 663, would likewise be substantially applicable to H. R. 2741. Some, though not a considerable, difference in cost would be occasioned by the variances between the two bills in the exact criteria with respect to the disabilities covered. However, no accurate data are readily available to indicate precisely the extent of this difference.

The allowance of \$1,900 in each case would, however, increase the estimated cost of H. R. 2741 over that for H. R. 289, above. If each of 12,900 qualified for the benefit at the full amount of \$1,900 each the cost for this group would aggregate \$24,510,000. This does not include the indeterminate number who are receiving retirement benefits from the service departments and who might qualify under the bill, or those who might qualify by disabilities incurred subsequent to enactment of the bill.

In this connection, it is pertinent to repeat that as of February 28, 1947, 13,795 World War II veterans had been certified as eligible, by reason of the nature of their disabilities, to receive benefits under Public Law 663, Seventy-ninth Congress. 8,611 of these had procured automobiles, and their cases had been certified for payment, in the aggregate amount of \$13,663,688. If the full number of 13,795 qualify as operators and acquire conveyances at a cost of approximately \$1,600 each, the cost for the group approved to February 28, 1947, will exceed \$22,000,000. It is anticipated that with the additional cases which will be processed by June 30, 1947, the existing appropriation of \$30,000,000 will be substantially consumed.

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

For the foregoing reasons the Veterans' Administration is unable to recommend favorable consideration by your committee of H. R. 289, H. R. 678, H. R. 1039, H. R. 1449, H. R. 1894, and H. R. 2741.

As indicated in the discussion of H. R. 678, it is recommended, however, that consideration be given to legislation which would provide, in permanent form, substantially the same benefit to the same class as that presently provided by Public Law 663, Seventy-ninth Congress, revised to authorize the Administrator to pay not to exceed

\$1,600 on the purchase price of a conveyance costing in excess of that amount, prescribing a reasonable limitation upon the period subsequent to date of enactment or date of discharge, whichever is the later, within which the benefit may be obtained, and specifically excluding persons who have obtained a conveyance under Public Law 663.

Advice has been received from the Bureau of the Budget that there would be no objection by that Office to the submission of this report to your committee.

Sincerely yours,

OMAR N. BRADLEY,
General, United States Army, Administrator.

Enclosure.

Comparative analysis of certain bills relating to automobiles or other conveyances for disabled veterans, pending before the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, House of Representatives

Bill	Cost of conveyance	Veterans' service	Disabilities covered	Operation of vehicle	Repair, maintenance, or replacement, etc.	Time limitation as to obtaining benefits
Present law, Public Law 663, 79th Cong.	Total purchase price limited to \$1,600, including necessary special equipment.	World War II.....	Loss or loss of use of one or both legs at or above the ankle. ¹	Veteran must be able to operate conveyance safely and be licensed to operate by proper licensing authority.	No repair, maintenance, or replacement at Government expense.	June 30, 1947. ²
H. R. 289.....	Total purchase price limited to \$1,700 for "suitably equipped" conveyance.	All veterans.....	Loss or permanent loss of use of one or both feet, or one or both hands, or permanent blindness of both eyes with 5/200 visual acuity or less. ¹	No requirement that veteran be able to operate vehicle.	Except for training veteran in use of equipment no Government liability with respect to use, repair, maintenance, or replacement. Veteran who received conveyance under Public Law 663, 79th Cong. not eligible.	No time limitation specified.
H. R. 673.....	Government to pay not to exceed \$1,600, but no limitation on total purchase price; no reference to special equipment.	World War I or World War II.....	Service incurred loss or loss of use of one or more limbs above the ankle joint.	No requirement that veteran be able to operate vehicle.	No Government liability in connection with operation, use, repair, maintenance, or replacement. Veteran who received conveyance under Public Law 663, 79th Cong., not eligible.	No payment by Government shall be made more than 3 years from enactment of bill or from date of veteran's discharge, whichever is later.
H. R. 1039.....	Total purchase price limited to \$1,700, including necessary special equipment.	World War II.....	Loss or loss of use of one or both arms or hands at or above the wrist, or loss or loss of use of one or both legs at or above the ankle. ¹	Veteran must be able to operate conveyance safely and be licensed to operate by proper licensing authority.	No Government liability to repair, maintain, or replace the conveyance. ⁴	No time limitation specified.
H. R. 1449 would amend present law.	Total purchase price limited to \$1,600, including necessary special equipment.	Would extend Public Law 663 to include disability incurred in service between Oct. 16, 1940, and Dec. 7, 1941, where not finally discharged until after Dec. 7, 1941.	Loss or loss of use of one or both legs at or above the ankle. ¹	Veteran must be able to operate conveyance safely and be licensed to operate by proper licensing authority.	No repair, maintenance, or replacement at Government expense.	June 30, 1947, if bill enacted prior to that date. ³

<p>H. R. 1894 would amend present law.</p>	<p>Total purchase price limited to \$1,600, including necessary special equipment.</p>	<p>World War II.....</p>	<p>(1) Loss or loss of use of one or both legs at or above the ankle, or (2) loss or loss of use of (A) a substantial portion of both feet and (B) one or both arms at or above the wrist.¹</p>	<p>Veteran must be able to operate conveyance safely and be licensed to operate by proper licensing authority.</p>	<p>No repair, maintenance or replacement at Government expense.</p>	<p>June 30, 1947, if bill enacted prior to that date.²</p>
<p>H. R. 2741.....</p>	<p>Government to pay not to exceed \$1,900 on price of "suitably equipped" conveyance. No limit on total purchase price.</p>	<p>All veterans.....</p>	<p>Loss or permanent loss of use of one or both legs at or above ankle or one or both arms at or above wrist, or permanent visual defects involving central visual acuity of 20/200 or less in better eye, or central visual acuity of more than 20/200 where there is a specified contraction of the field of vision in better eye.¹</p>	<p>No requirement that veteran be qualified to operate vehicle.</p>	<p>No Government liability as to operation, repair, maintenance, or replacement. Veteran who received conveyance under Public Law 663, 79th Cong., not eligible.</p>	<p>No time limitation specified.</p>

¹ Must be entitled to compensation under laws administered by the Veterans' Administration.

² By decision dated Dec. 26, 1946 (B-61701), the Comptroller General held that his office would not be required to object to the use of the appropriation provided by Public Law 663, 79th Cong., where under procedure of Veterans' Administration an obligation of \$1,600 to cover the purchase price of conveyance is regularly placed of record against the appropriation on or before June 30, 1947, pursuant to approval of veterans' application, even though sales agreement as to vehicle not executed until thereafter.

³ Sec. 4 of H. R. 678, 80th Cong., makes express provision for the application of the penal provisions of Public Law 2, 73d Cong., approved Mar. 20, 1933, as amended.

⁴ No express reference to ease where the veteran has obtained conveyance at Government expense pursuant to Public Law 653, 79th Cong.

The changes proposed by these bills may be summarized as follows:

1. It is proposed to extend the grant of automobiles to veterans blinded while in service and to veterans suffering from the loss of, or loss of use of, one or both arms.

2. Another change would make these benefits available to the disabled veterans of all previous wars and to veterans of the peacetime service.

3. It is proposed that we discard the requirement that a veteran be qualified and properly licensed to operate a vehicle in order to be eligible for one.

4. The proposal is made that Government payment on a vehicle be increased by varying amounts. The maximum is \$1,900.

5. It is proposed that the Government may make partial payment to the limit fixed by law on a vehicle where the balance of its cost is to be paid by the veteran.

6. And the requirement is made that the disabled veteran be properly trained by the Veterans' Administration in the operation of his vehicle.

To give you my opinion on the desirability or the likely effect of each of these changes, I shall take them up one by one.

Of the six bills before you, four would extend the grant of automobiles to veterans suffering from the loss, or the loss of use of, one or both arms. Two of these bills would likewise include blinded veterans.

No one will question the right of armless or blinded veterans to substantial Government aid. In appearing before congressional committees, I have always advocated the concentration of long-term veterans' benefits in favor of disabled veterans.

And yet, as I have indicated before, we have progressed on the theory that the disabled veteran is best helped by helping him to help himself. Armless veterans are not only equipped with limbs and trained in the use of those devices, but, more importantly, they are taught skills and professions where the disabling effect of the loss of a limb is minimized. This program of vocational rehabilitation was established following World War I. It was afterward reestablished by Public Law 16 and has already resulted in the restoration of thousands to useful, productive lives.

In addition, the armless veteran is awarded lifetime compensation to help him piece out the extra costs of living, to offset his possible loss in earnings, and to guarantee him, as far as possible, an adequate standard of living. The disabling effects of amputation or loss of use of limbs are recognized by the award of special payments in addition to normal compensation for the degree of disability.

For example, where the loss of two limbs is involved, compensation rates may range from \$240 to \$318 a month. This contrasts with the normal wartime rate of \$138 per month for total disability. And where there are additional complications, the awards may run as high as \$360 per month. It is perfectly true that even \$4,000 a year will not repay a man for the loss of two or more of his limbs. But it does grant him a modest standard of living and a measure of security for life.

If it is held that the grant of an automobile is vital to the successful rehabilitation of a legless veteran, who is impaired in his freedom to travel, it is difficult to see how the same contention

can be applied to an armless one. Unlike the legless veteran, he has not materially suffered from loss of his freedom of movement. If justification is given this proposed grant of automobiles to armless veterans, we might ask why equal justification could not be given the grant of any other form of extra compensation.

The position of the blinded veteran—if more tragic than that of the armless one—is, nevertheless, similar in many respects. Again, there is nothing the Government can do to compensate him for this terrible disability. Even more than most critically injured veterans, the blinded veteran has paid with as great a part of his life as he can possibly give.

In our effort to help him to the limit of our resources, we have sought to guide the blinded veteran toward as great a degree of self-reliance as he can attain. Under the provisions of Public Law 16, hundreds of blinded veterans have been taught skills, trades, and professions in which they actually earn a substantial part of their living.

Seeing-eye dogs and mechanical devices are provided to help them in getting about. Compensation laws for blinded veterans guarantee them a considerable measure of economic independence. In some instances they are approximately twice the normal rates payable to other totally disabled veterans.

Unlike the armless veteran, the blinded man is seriously restricted in his freedom to travel. In his case, however, a vehicle could not be considered a prosthetic appliance capable of contributing to his self-sufficiency. In fact, if such a vehicle were to prove of any real value to him, an arrangement would have to be made for a driver.

The blinded veteran, more than any other disabled person, must strive constantly for a disciplined sense of self-reliance. While the grant of an automobile might add to his comfort and convenience, it is questionable whether it would help him to develop that necessary feeling of independence.

Again, I must ask if we are approaching this problem realistically when we propose to make a one-time grant of automobiles to our blinded veterans. If the blinded veteran has need for an automobile now, eventually he will need a replacement; for ownership of a vehicle will not help him directly in overcoming his handicap. I favor the adequate and equitable payment of compensation to blinded veterans, but I think we must conscientiously question the wisdom of deliberately encouraging his dependence by piecing out compensation with the grant of an automobile.

I am not for one moment suggesting that the blinded veteran is not entitled to the comfort and convenience a vehicle might grant him—certainly far more than any of us—but I must ask if we, in our zeal to help him, may not, in fact, be hurting him in the stern task of rehabilitation.

Last year I risked the prediction that legislation of this character would be followed by repeated demands for an extension of its benefits. Unless we exercise discretion in the distribution of these cars, we shall find that a more extensive award justifies the demands of still other veterans with similar or related injuries.

For instance, if the grant of automobiles is extended to veterans suffering from the loss of an arm, how shall we deny vehicles to those

veterans suffering from serious heart and lung conditions and whose freedom to travel is plainly restricted. In our effort to broaden benefits of the existing law, there is the danger that we shall only create inequities affecting other groups of veterans.

If we stray from the theory of making this grant on the basis of its actual value in the rehabilitation of veterans, we shall give up our only sound yardstick and risk the peril of not knowing where to call a halt.

Of the six bills under consideration, two would extend benefits to veterans of all previous wars and the peacetime service. Another would make grants to veterans of World Wars I and II. And still a fourth would broaden the base to include veterans who were disabled after selective-service registration and who were not discharged until after Pearl Harbor.

Once again, I must refer to our basic premise on rehabilitation.

If the original grant was made to aid legless veterans in achieving readjustment and if our failure to provide for the replacement of these cars can be interpreted as proof of the fact that Congress voted these automobiles for their value in rehabilitation, we shall be hard pressed to find justification for this award to veterans of World War I and the Spanish War.

Those wars are already 29 and 49 years behind us. Most of the disabled veterans of those wars have long since been readjusted, both psychologically and economically. For those who have not, there is little likelihood that the award of these cars will help them now.

It is perfectly true that some of them may have been victims of the negligence of our Government in its failure to help them through rehabilitation. But it is questionable whether we should undertake to right those wrongs a quarter or even half a century later. If we can justify the award of these vehicles at this time to veterans of all previous wars, we shall certainly establish a precedent which could warrant the long-time replacement of vehicles for veterans of World War II. Again, I must hold to my views on the specific value of these cars during the period of rehabilitation. I believe that is the only justification for their grant.

Of the six bills considered here, three would eliminate the requirement that veterans eligible for the grant of cars also be qualified and licensed for their operation. Since the present grant is limited to veterans whose leg injuries restrict their travels and who are, nevertheless, qualified to operate their vehicles with the aid of special equipment, their automobiles can logically be considered to be temporary prosthetic appliances. If we dispense with the requirement that the veteran be able to operate his vehicle, we dispute our premise that cars can be justified only when they aid in rehabilitation. If this yardstick is denied me, I am left without a sound basis on which to form an opinion.

Among these six bills, three would hold the cost of vehicles purchased by the Government to the existing figure of \$1,600. A fourth would likewise hold the Government's payment to \$1,600, but it would permit this payment to be made on a car of any price if the veteran pays the difference. A fifth bill would increase the purchase price to \$1,700. And a sixth would further increase the Government's payment to \$1,900 and remove the limit on the total purchase price.

We are told that in some parts of the country veterans are experiencing difficulty in purchasing particular models within the purchase price. This is especially true on the west coast, where transportation charges frequently boost the clutchless cars beyond the \$1,600 limit. And yet, because of the greater ease in driving, these are the vehicles that disabled veterans seem to prefer.

Like everyone else, some disabled veterans have faced delays in delivery on new automobiles. Even the eagerness of many dealers to give priority to disabled veterans has not been able to keep full pace with their needs.

Despite this, however, of the 14,461 World War II veterans certified as eligible for vehicles on March 31, 1947, 10,069 had already been delivered their conveyances. You recognize, of course, that the veteran must make his own arrangements for purchase after his application for eligibility has been approved. The sales agreement is thereafter forwarded to the Veterans' Administration for payment.

I would strongly favor lifting the restriction that prevents the veteran from paying the difference on a car costing in excess of \$1,600. This will go to insure him a car of his own choice. If we can anticipate a general lowering in prices on new cars, I would recommend that we hold to the existing limit on Government payment. Vehicles in the low-priced field are now available within that limit.

There is a particular need to amend the existing law on the time limitation which has been set. As the law now reads, the funds appropriated for the purchase of automobiles for disabled veterans will no longer be available for obligation after June 30, 1947. This early cut-off date is markedly unfair to veterans who, though otherwise qualified for the grant of automobiles, have not yet been released from Army and Navy hospitals, or who will not yet be released at the time this act expires. Surely it is not the intent of Congress that these persons be deprived of vehicles simply because their injuries have not permitted earlier discharge.

Of the six bills under discussion, three would altogether remove the time limitation. A fourth would limit payment to 3 years after enactment of the bill, or 3 years after discharge of the veterans, whichever may be the later. And the remaining two bills would retain the expiration date of June 30, 1947. I would recommend that some time limit be established in order that the program may be liquidated at its completion. But I would also recommend that this time limit be generous enough to permit all eligible veterans to qualify for their grants.

One of the proposed bills would have the Veterans' Administration establish a program for the training of disabled veterans in the operation of their vehicles. Experience has shown that most disabled veterans have already been trained in the operation of specially equipped vehicles at the service hospitals in which they were treated. Those who were not trained at these centers, have been adequately trained in their home localities without help from us. I am confident there are sufficient community resources to offer this help to disabled veterans. I would think it impractical and unnecessarily expensive for us to establish a Nation-wide system of training for drivers. Such procedures would only burden the administrative overhead of these proposals.

We do anticipate that the \$30,000,000 appropriated for Public Law 663 will have been largely exhausted by the end of this fiscal year. The 10,069 veterans who had purchased automobiles by March 31, 1947, had obligated the fund for \$15,984,725. If the full 14,461 veterans who had established their eligibility by March 31 qualify for operators' licenses and purchase cars, we will have obligated the fund for approximately \$23,000,000. The additional group which may be expected to apply for vehicles between March 31 and the end of this fiscal year will, presumably, consume most of the balance of this fund.

If the proposal is accepted to extend the grant on automobiles to veterans of all previous wars and the peacetime service who have been blinded or have lost use of one or both hands or feet, approximately 12,900 additional veterans would become eligible for automobiles. Under the terms of H. R. 289, which would establish the price of each car at \$1,700, the total additional cost might amount to approximately \$22,000,000. Under the terms of H. R. 2741, which would fix the Government's share at \$1,900, the total additional cost might amount to approximately \$24,500,000. Precise estimates on both these bills would be altered by the somewhat different definition of disabilities, especially in visual defects, by the number of veterans drawing retirement benefits from the service departments, and by the number who might become eligible after the enactment of the measure.

Passage of H. R. 678, which would extend the grant of automobiles to veterans of both World War I and World War II who lost, or lost the use of, one or both limbs above the ankle joint would add approximately 3,400 veterans of World War I. Another 100 veterans of World War II might be included with elimination of the requirement that a veteran also be qualified to operate his vehicle. At a maximum price of \$1,600 per vehicle, the cost of these changes would amount to approximately \$5,600,000.

H. R. 1039 would make automobiles available to World War II veterans who suffered the loss of, or loss of use of, one or both arms. This would make approximately 5,300 additional veterans eligible for cars. At an estimated cost of \$1,700 per car, this bill would involve a total expenditure of approximately \$9,000,000.

In summarizing my position, I want to say again that we must weigh the principles as well as the specific grants of these proposals. If a vehicle is not to be employed in the actual rehabilitation of the disabled veteran, then we must assume that it is being granted him as a premium form of compensation.

Mr. MATHEWS. Mrs. Rogers, would you like to ask the general any questions?

The CHAIRMAN. General Bradley, you very definitely recommend the extension of time for the application for the cars?

General BRADLEY. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. So that all the men who are now hospitalized may be benefited?

General BRADLEY. Yes. Some of the more severely wounded men are not yet out of the hospital, and it seems to us only fair to extend the period, if possible, so that they can also benefit from the present law.

The CHAIRMAN. That is set out in the committee print. I think that most of the press did not see your recommendation on that. You recommended that before, I know.

General BRADLEY. I thought I had covered that here, too.

The CHAIRMAN. Yes, you have. I am bringing that out just for the benefit of the press.

General BRADLEY. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. And also for the men. I think that many of the men did not understand that General Bradley recommended the extension of time.

General BRADLEY. We also recommend—and I would like to make that clear—that the law be changed so that the veteran can pay additional money if he wants a higher-priced car.

The CHAIRMAN. I do not want to take up the time of the subcommittee. I am only an ex officio member.

Mr. MATHEWS. You may ask any questions you like. You are the chairman of the committee and, as such, also a member of the subcommittee.

Mr. Price, have you any question?

Mr. PRICE. I studied the general's statement very thoroughly and, offhand, I would say he has answered all the questions I would want to ask right now. I cannot think of any questions, outside of the one that Mrs. Rogers asked.

You definitely favor an extension of the time limit, and you would favor the bill to permit the veteran to add to the purchase price?

General BRADLEY. That is correct. And, in the extension of the time, we would also recommend some eventual time limit—3 years, or something—so that the program could eventually be liquidated; and also some period in there within which it is presumed that the veteran will have been rehabilitated to that extent.

Mr. PRICE. Assuming that there would be no other amputees' legislation enacted in this session of Congress, would you need a deficiency appropriation to complete this program?

General BRADLEY. This program expires on June 30 of this year, and we do not need any additional money.

Mr. PRICE. To cover even those coming between March 31, the date which you mentioned, and the end of the program?

General BRADLEY. We have sufficient funds for that. If the period is extended beyond that time, then we would need additional funds in the succeeding years.

Mr. MATHEWS. Mr. Donohue.

Mr. DONOHUE. I do not know that there are any questions that I have in mind, but, in view of the fact that I arrived a little late, General, is it my understanding that your position is one in opposition to the extension of additional benefits, or benefits to an additional number other than those that are being taken care of now in bills that have been passed by other Congresses?

General BRADLEY. We question the advisability of extending it to additional classes, although we realize that you cannot do enough for these people for the losses suffered. But, at the same time, if you look upon it as a question of rehabilitation and aid to rehabilitation, we believe if you go any further in the classes of disabled veterans to which to grant the automobiles, there is hardly any place to stop, because there are a lot of other classes of disabled veterans that have suffered to the extent that they have difficulty in getting around, like a man who has lost one lung, or a man with heart trouble, or such things as that.

Mr. MATHEWS. Is there anything further?

Mr. Vail.

Mr. VAIL. No comments at the moment.

Mr. MATHEWS. I see Mr. Teague is up there. Although he is not a member of the subcommittee, I would like to afford him an opportunity to ask any questions he would like.

Mr. TEAGUE. General, I am particularly interested in a man who has lost parts of a foot. What about this provision in the bill "at the ankle or above the ankle?"

General BRADLEY. I understand that that was put in the bill as one way to express a limitation on it. You would have to stop somewhere, I should think, unless you want to go all the way down and say that a man who has lost a toe, for example, would be eligible, and some of them who have lost a toe or two have no trouble getting around. But somewhere between that and the amputation you would have to set some limit.

Mr. TEAGUE. There are many cases where a man has lost half of his foot and he has much more difficulty with that than some of the above-ankle amputees. But the doctors went on the theory of cutting off nothing that they didn't have to, and have left many men with part of a foot that gives them more trouble than the man who has lost all of his foot.

Did you see the report from the DAV that was submitted this year?

General BRADLEY. No; I did not see it.

Mr. TEAGUE. I wish that Mr. Camp would give the general a copy of that.

(The report from the DAV was furnished General Bradley.)

Mr. TEAGUE. I simply believe that there should be some change in the bill in that way. It is a discrimination against the boys who are left with part of a foot that gives them as much or more trouble than if they had lost the whole foot.

General BRADLEY. We would have no objection to extending it to anything that the Congress thought was the particular type that should be included, that led to the granting of the cars for the purpose of rehabilitation. That would be a matter for the Congress to decide. Last year they wrote it up to include at or above the ankle. But we would not have any objection to any definition that Congress would put on it that required a car in helping him.

Mr. TEAGUE. I do not suppose that there has been any check made of how many additional men would be brought under the extension of it in that way.

General BRADLEY. I do not believe we have any figures because there would be so many degrees of it.

Mr. TEAGUE. General, do you know what would be done about a man who has had a brain injury that has caused a limitation of his locomotion as far as the leg is concerned? What has been the attitude or the interpretation of the Veterans' Administration of a man in that condition?

General BRADLEY. May I ask a man in our Claims Department whether or not we have had any of those cases?

Mr. TEAGUE. Yes.

General BRADLEY. Give your name to the reporter.

**STATEMENT OF HENRY S. CHICK, EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT FOR
CLAIMS, VETERANS' ADMINISTRATION**

Mr. CHICK. My name is Henry S. Chick.

Mr. TEAGUE. I am asking about a man who has received a brain injury and suffered a loss or limitation to his locomotion. Would he be eligible for this?

Mr. CHICK. If he has lost the use at or above the ankle he would be entitled to it.

Mr. TEAGUE. In other words, a man who had a brain injury that caused him to drag that leg, that would entitle him to a car?

Mr. CHICK. Not necessarily. It would depend on the particular injury.

Mr. TEAGUE. Do you know whether any of those men have been given cars?

Mr. CHICK. I couldn't answer that offhand without getting figures. There are a lot of them who are not entitled to a car because they have not lost the use at or above the ankle.

Mr. TEAGUE. You do not know whether any man who has had a brain injury affecting his locomotion has received a car?

Mr. CHICK. I could not answer that offhand. I suppose if he has lost the use of his lower extremity at or above the ankle he would be eligible.

Mr. DONOHUE. What interpretation have you given to "loss of use"?

Mr. CHICK. Where he has not any more use than he would have with a well-fitted prosthetic appliance.

Mr. DONOHUE. In other words, carrying out Mr. Teague's thought, if he received a brain injury that caused one of his legs to be dragged along, in your opinion would that be construed as loss of use?

Mr. CHICK. Not necessarily. If he would not get any more use from that limb than he would from a proper prosthetic appliance, then it would be loss of use.

Mr. TEAGUE. I have seen three men in Washington recently—if you know what it is you can spot them easily—and I asked those men, and they told me that they had been turned down for the car.

Mr. DONOHUE. To what percentage must loss of use be suffered to have it construed as loss of use?

Mr. CHICK. It is no percentage. The minimum rating they would have now to justify loss of use at or above the ankle would be 40 percent. Yet you could have a man with gunshot wounds of the muscles and that may go as high as 40 percent, and he might not be considered to have loss of use.

Mr. TEAGUE. How about a man with a dropped foot?

Mr. CHICK. Ordinarily he would not have it.

Mr. TEAGUE. He would not have the use of it?

Mr. CHICK. Ordinarily.

Mr. DONOHUE. In other words, if a man could get along with a cane or a crutch he would not be construed as a loss of use?

Mr. CHICK. It would depend on the circumstances of the particular case. We have evaluations that would permit the payment of a special monthly pension for the loss of use of a foot. It would not meet the requirements now for loss at or above the ankle.

Mr. TEAGUE. Would you place in the hearings later as to whether or not any man had been given a car as a result of a brain injury causing loss of locomotion, not from an injury to his limb?

Mr. CHICK. Yes. There are plenty of men with paraplegia who are paralyzed from the waist down.

(The requested information follows:)

Records of the Veterans' Administration disclose a veteran has been furnished an automobile on account of of hemiplegia, right, severe, result of brain injury.

Mr. TEAGUE. I mean a brain injury. Any man who was clipped through the brain usually has lost the use of his limbs on one side, depending on which side had the injury.

Mr. DONOHUE. In those cases where they have ankylosis of a knee joint or of an ankle joint, what interpretation has the Veterans' Administration put upon that?

Mr. CHICK. Generally he has not lost the use of that extremity, even though he may have ankylosis.

Mr. DONOHUE. Can you appreciate a person with ankylosis of the knee joint having any use of that limb?

Mr. CHICK. Yes. There are plenty of them who walk on it.

Mr. DONOHUE. There are cases of ankylosis where one cannot bend that joint.

Mr. CHICK. It would all depend upon the extent of the injury in the individual case.

Mr. DONOHUE. In other words, each case is considered on its individual merits?

Mr. CHICK. That is right.

Mr. DONOHUE. Well, in those cases where use of a limb is necessary to operate a machine or a press and the person, due to paralysis of that particular leg, cannot operate the press, would you then say he had suffered the loss of use of it?

Mr. CHICK. No; because under the present schedule we have to rate on an average basis—not on an individual basis.

Mr. DONOHUE. Are you not being a little inconsistent when you say that you consider cases on an individual basis rather than on an average basis?

Mr. CHICK. The extent of the injury depends upon the facts in the particular case.

Mr. DONOHUE. In other words, you do not arrive at your conclusions by averages?

Mr. CHICK. No. We cannot arrive at a conclusion by averages, but upon the facts in each individual case. The injury is individual. The extent of disability is individual.

Mr. TEAGUE. What type of board finally adjudicates these cases?

Mr. CHICK. A rating board consisting of a rating specialist, medical; rating specialist, claims; and a rating specialist, occupational; in addition to which they have a right to appeal to the Board of Veterans' Appeals.

Mr. DONOHUE. Who sits on the Board of Veterans' Appeals?

Mr. CHICK. They have groups of three—legal men and doctors.

Mr. MATHEWS. If I may interject this, if this committee and the Congress approve a bill I have put in, a man would be allowed, even if he were turned down by the Board of Veterans' Appeals, to take

his case to the United States district court. Just what attitude the Congress will take on that I do not know.

Mr. DONOHUE. I do not want to appear to be critical of the Board of Appeals or of the Veterans' Administration, but I think that is an excellent thought.

Mr. MATHEWS. I do myself.

Do you have anything else, Mr. Donohue?

Mr. DONOHUE. No.

Mr. MATHEWS. Mrs. Rogers.

The CHAIRMAN. General Bradley, there are two men, Mr. Gore and Mr. Moss, who have come from the Hines Hospital in Illinois. They are paraplegia cases. They sleep at the hospital at night and they go to and from work in their automobiles. If they did not have the automobiles they could not go to work. Do you not think that is a part of their rehabilitation?

General BRADLEY. Yes. We have so stated, that where a man has lost the use of his legs, either by back injury or by amputation, and he uses his car to go back and forth to work or to his studies it aids him in rehabilitation.

The CHAIRMAN. Take a man with both arms off, if he goes in a streetcar or bus, he cannot hold on very well. He may fall and break his prosthetic appliance, maybe open up the stump and hurt himself badly. He cannot carry anything. I think that is a part of rehabilitation. Many of them drive cars, as you know.

General BRADLEY. We have not considered that as the same case as a man who has lost the use of a leg.

The CHAIRMAN. They have a very definite loss of balance as does a man with one arm off.

Mr. VAIL. On page 4, General, the statement is made:

No one will question the right of armless or blinded veterans to substantial Government aid.

To my way of thinking that word "substantial" might well be changed to "unlimited aid" to provide absolute comfort for the veteran who has suffered those handicaps.

In the second paragraph following that the statement is made:

In addition, the armless veteran is awarded lifetime compensation to help him piece out the extra costs of living, to offset his possible loss in earnings, and to guarantee him as far as possible an adequate standard of living.

My feeling has always been that a grateful Government and a grateful people should make it their business to insure complete comfort, complete financial security to the veteran who has suffered those handicaps. We seem to be able to spread tremendous sums all over the world, and we seem to be able to spread tremendous sums among veterans who have suffered no handicaps, and, if it becomes a financial matter, it would be my feeling that the compensation granted to veterans who came out the war whole should be reduced in favor of granting extended consideration to the disabled veteran.

I do not believe there should be any restriction on the extent of the service, the financial assistance that is extended to disabled veterans and I, perforce, then, must take exception to the language that is used in indicating the extent of the Government assistance that should be extended to disabled veterans.

General BRADLEY. I do not think you disagree with me at all, sir, because I said a while ago that we had always been in favor of doing what Congress thought necessary to help disabled veterans.

Mr. VAIL. I do not think we disagree at all. I just wanted to frame it in such a way as to express my disposition in the matter and that I think we should not restrict these benefits.

General BRADLEY. I used the word "substantial" because I do not dare to use the word "unlimited." "Substantial" can mean a good deal, but "unlimited" would be quite something.

Mr. VAIL. But the full extension of comforts and the luxuries, as far as we can go financially, should be extended to those men.

General BRADLEY. That, of course, is entirely a question for Congress to decide.

I think there is one other point that comes into it, of course, which is that you do not want to take the incentive away from a man to do something for himself, because a man who is not busy is unhappy.

Mr. VAIL. The incentive can be extended from other sources. I do not think that we should make that incentive an economic necessity.

Mr. MATHEWS. General, without disputing many of the principles that you have laid down here, I am somewhat puzzled as to your application of those principles, and perhaps you can clarify some of those for me.

Do I understand you to look upon the act which has already been passed as merely a measure of rehabilitation, or do you also look upon the automobile which is given a man as a prosthetic appliance?

General BRADLEY. You could look upon it as both—as a temporary prosthetic appliance to help him in his rehabilitation.

Mr. MATHEWS. During the rehabilitation period.

Now, generally speaking, a prosthetic appliance is renewed if it wears out, by the Veterans' Administration, is it not?

General BRADLEY. Yes.

Mr. MATHEWS. Now, the general has said nothing in his statement with regard to his views on whether or not automobiles given to veterans already under the existing law should be replaced from time to time. What is the general's view on that?

General BRADLEY. I do not believe that we should try to replace them indefinitely.

Mr. MATHEWS. In other words, the granting of this automobile is a limited grant as a prosthetic appliance, and after the man has had the automobile the length of time until it needs to be renewed, he has still some value in it to trade in to get a new prosthetic appliance?

General BRADLEY. Yes. Eventually that would play out, but by that time the man should be rehabilitated to the point where he should not need this additional help in the way of additional prosthetic appliance.

Mr. MATHEWS. You would not say that as to any other prosthetic appliance? You would not take his prosthetic appliance away, would you?

General BRADLEY. No, sir.

Mr. MATHEWS. So that it actually is both, is it not, General? It is both a means of rehabilitation and a prosthetic appliance?

General BRADLEY. Yes. That is right.

Mr. MATHEWS. That is, to the limited extent that it is gradually diminishing in value, so far as the man is concerned, and if he is to

keep that prosthetic appliance he will have to spend some of his own money from time to time to renew it; is that correct?

General BRADLEY. That is right.

Mr. MATHEWS. Now, General, with respect to the blind, there is a statement made on page 5 that I would like to ask you about. Near the middle of page 5 you say:

The blinded veteran, more than any other disabled person, must strive constantly for a disciplined sense of self-reliance. While the grant of an automobile might add to his comfort and convenience, it is questionable whether it would help him to develop that necessary feeling of independence.

Do you think that same thing applies to a man who has an automobile under the present act, that it does not help him develop his necessary feeling of independence?

General BRADLEY. No, sir; that is not what I meant. We find from experience that the blinded veteran is the one who is the hardest to rehabilitate and create within him a feeling of ambition to do something, and that was the reason for this statement here. I believe he has a harder time, as I stated here, in developing that desire and ambition to do something than any other class of disabled veteran. At least, that is what I have been told by the people who have been in the Veterans' Administration for a long time and have been connected with the rehabilitation program for a long time.

Mr. MATHEWS. Then, as I understand you, due to the difference in the type of disability, while the granting of an automobile under the present law might not injure the recipient's developing the necessary feeling of independence, it might in the case of a blinded man?

General BRADLEY. It might to some extent. I do not put any emphasis on it, but, from our experience, we think it might have some effect on some of the blinded veterans.

Mr. MATHEWS. Now, for the moment looking at the automobile as both a rehabilitation measure and a prosthetic appliance, would you consider that it is in any way equal to the giving of a blinded man a seeing-eye dog? In other words, do you feel that, from the standpoint of locomotion, the granting of an automobile under the present existing law to those entitled to it is equal to the furnishing of a seeing-eye dog to a blinded veteran? Or, to put it the other way, is the granting of a seeing-eye dog to a blinded veteran equal to the granting of an automobile for a man who has a disability in his legs?

General BRADLEY. That would depend entirely upon what comparison you made in trying to decide which one was greater or less than the other. Certainly, the amputee can use the car as a means of locomotion because he can drive it. The seeing-eye dog is given to the man as a guide. Certainly, the seeing-eye dog cannot take a man as far and as quickly as a car can take the amputee.

Mr. MATHEWS. So, so far as the matter of locomotion is concerned, or considering it as a prosthetic appliance for the amputee, the fact that the blinded man has a seeing-eye dog does not furnish him with the same means of locomotion as the automobile.

General BRADLEY. No; not if you look upon it as a question of time or distance. Certainly, the automobile would be no good to the blinded man without a driver.

Mr. MATHEWS. And legs to a blinded man are not much good if he cannot see where he is going.

General BRADLEY. No. He is limited.

Mr. MATHEWS. He has the means of locomotion, but when he hasn't his sight it isn't much good to him.

General BRADLEY. I am not arguing that.

Mr. MATHEWS. I just want to get it clear, because it seems to me—and I must admit that when we originally passed this act we opened up a great many problems—that now our job, as members of this subcommittee and of the committee and as Members of Congress, is as to how we shall resolve these problems. Shall we say, "Thus far we go and no farther," and leave many inequalities? Or shall we go a little farther and say, "We will leave, at least, less inequalities"? I do not suppose there is any perfect solution.

Take, for instance, an armless man, one who has no use of his arms, or no arms, he certainly is not in a position to utilize public transportation with the same facility as a man who has the use of his arms; is he?

General BRADLEY. No.

Mr. MATHEWS. Getting on and off trains or busses or any such thing as that.

General BRADLEY. He is certainly handicapped, but not to the extent of a man who has lost a leg.

Mr. MATHEWS. Not to the same extent. But he is severely handicapped without arms when he tries to get on a public conveyance, like a train or a trolley or a bus or even a taxicab.

General BRADLEY. I do not think anyone would argue that question.

Mr. MATHEWS. I think that is all.

Mr. DONOHUE. In other words, General, you are perfectly in accord with giving the veterans every benefit necessary to enable them to rehabilitate themselves?

General BRADLEY. Yes; but I question this method, that this is the way to give it to them.

Mr. MATHEWS. Well, this is the way Congress started, General. That is the problem that we are facing at the present time. I do not think that any of us needs to go into the original problem of whether this was a wise piece of legislation in the first place. That is beside the point. Our problem is what shall we do with it as it stands. Will we leave it alone? Shall we extend it further? If it created inequalities originally, is it wiser to spend a little more money and have a few less inequalities; or not spend any more money and leave it as it stands? That is the problem.

Mr. PRICE. And the general and the Veterans' Administration are perfectly willing to follow the will of Congress?

General BRADLEY. Certainly. That is what we are there for. We are down there to administer the laws passed by Congress.

Mr. MATHEWS. Thank you, sir. We shall probably be calling on you from time to time for estimates of costs and such technical things. I know that the general will have his staff furnish that to us.

General BRADLEY. We will be glad to do so.

Mr. MATHEWS. Thank you, General.

Mr. Sulkin.

Mr. Sulkin, the committee will be very glad to hear from you. Will you give your full name and address?

STATEMENT OF AARON MURRAY SULKIN, BALTIMORE, MD.

Mr. SULKIN. Yes, sir. The name is Aaron Murray Sulkin, 5612 Parkside Avenue, Baltimore 15, Md.

Unfortunately, unlike the general, I cannot read a prepared script. I might, by reading figures, as he did, be able to show cause for one thing and another. The only thing I can do is to think, both with my brain and with my heart.

The idea of the general's thinking that by making things more difficult for the blind, that that is any way to overcome an obstacle, I do not follow. All that I can see it doing is tending to make us much more dependent upon other people. I have a wife who can drive me around; and I have a father and a mother. I have a little business to take care of which makes it necessary for me quite often to go out and call on people, to make sales and collections. What I need a car for is so that I will have much more independence. To go downtown by streetcar is something that I have done and can probably continue to do, or to go down by taxicab. But it is not the easiest way.

And, as far as training us to make our way by presenting us with obstacles, why not simply remove our canes and then make it even more difficult for us to overcome our obstacle? That, too, would lend better training.

If there is any way that I can put my point over more clearly, I do not know how. Probably later on I will think of something.

But I know a few of the blinded men. I know from personal experience and from conversation with them that most of us do tend to hibernate. It costs us so much additional money to live that the pension disappears before we even have a chance to use it for the easier way of life.

Mr. MATHEWS. Well, for myself, sir, I may say that probably from my questions of the general, you gathered that I did not agree with him on the situation of the blinded veterans.

Mr. SULKIN. Yes, sir.

Mr. MATHEWS. I see no reason why, if Congress, in its wisdom, determines to give an automobile to a man who is handicapped as you are, it is going to create any less initiative in him than in a man who sustained an amputation. So, as far as I am concerned, you may have no fear as to my views.

Mr. SULKIN. One other point: I overheard one of the gentlemen here at the table question the advisability of giving so much money all over the world. If the United States of America is wealthy enough to afford to do that, surely they are wealthy enough to clean up their own dirty wash before washing the rest of the world.

Mr. MATHEWS. I said something about that in a speech on the record morning.

Mr. SULKIN. Yes.

Mr. MATHEWS. I am inclined to agree with you on that.

Anything else, Mr. Sulkin?

Mr. SULKIN. No, sir. I believe I have propounded my thoughts clearly.

Mr. MATHEWS. Have the gentlemen of the committee any questions?

Mr. DONOHUE. Do you think, sir, that the furnishing of an automobile is the answer to the problems that young men like yourself

who have been blinded have to face? Do you think the furnishing of an automobile is the answer to your particular problem?

Mr. SULKIN. May I speak? Are you finished with the question?

Mr. DONOHUE. Yes.

Mr. SULKIN. No, I do not; but it would do a great deal to alleviate some of the difficulties which we encounter.

Mr. DONOHUE. I have in mind this: I want you to know that I think I am as sympathetic to the disabled veterans as anyone on the committee. I am quite certain, however, that Congress, in general, is most anxious to bring about legislation that will be most conducive to handling the problems with which all disabled veterans are confronted. In your particular case—we cannot take cases individually. I know you will agree with me there, won't you? In your particular case, you have a business background. Unfortunately, a lot of boys have not. And, not having a business background, they would not need a car to get around, such as you do.

We must take the situation generally, and not individually or particularly. As I say, I hope, personally, that legislation will be enacted that will place us in a position to take care of all disabled veterans adequately. Now, whether or not the automobile is one of the means of taking care of those problems, I think it is worthy of considerable study. If it is, I am most heartily going along with it.

Mr. MATHEWS. Maybe I can ask Mr. Sulkin this question: Do you not think, sir, that if a man with your affiliation knew that he could have the grant of an automobile which would allow him to carry on certain businesses which he could not carry on without it, that it would be an incentive, rather than a handicap, for him to rehabilitate himself?

Mr. SULKIN. Definitely, I do, sir. That suggestion is a very logical one and makes a great deal more sense, rather than to deny a man the incentive and the ability to pursue a more nearly normal way of life. I know that nothing in God's green world would possibly please me more than to have my sight restored. But the thing that causes me a little bit of doubt as to the wisdom of the Veterans' Administration is the idea that by making things more difficult they make it easier—they make it have more incentive.

I know, personally, that quite often, rather than going outside and enjoying what I would have enjoyed before, due to the headaches of worrying about taking a streetcar or catching a cab, I wind up hibernating in my home.

Are there any other questions?

Mr. VAIL. Mr. Sulkin, for the purpose of the record, I wonder, as a very intelligent representative of the blinded element of our veterans, if you could not outline for us what you feel would be an adequate and constructive program to assist the blinded veteran. We have been restricting our discussion to the use of automobiles. Now, what else would provide adequate treatment for that group?

Mr. MATHEWS. Might I interrupt right there? Since this hearing was called on this particular bill and there are a number of witnesses to be heard, would it be possible for Mr. Sulkin to get together with you at a later time?

Mr. VAIL. I simply wanted to take advantage of the fact that Mr. Sulkin is before us now. He may not be available at another time.

Mr. SULKIN. I can outline my point in just a couple of seconds.

Mr. MATHEWS. Very well.

Mr. SULKIN. No. 1: One good point that I would advise is to reshuffle the entire Veterans' Administration. I, personally, have gone down to them time after time and have come away sick to my stomach—so sick that I had to lie in my bed. That is one good point.

Investigate the IQ of every member of the VA, and why not see to it that right is given preference—that capability is given preference, rather than what seems to me to be either personalities, or favoritism. I know of men in the VA who should be on top, who, because they are not related to the proper people, are on the bottom.

Now, if there are no further questions, I think I have stated my points.

Mr. MATHEWS. Thank you, Mr. Sulkin, very much.

Mr. SULKIN. Thank you, gentlemen, for hearing me out.

The CHAIRMAN. Is Sergeant Beamon going to testify for Sergeant Martin?

STATEMENT OF SGT. EDWARD J. BEAMON

Sergeant BEAMON. Sergeant Martin is not here, but I will try to take his place.

Mr. MATHEWS. Give your full name to the reporter.

Sergeant BEAMON. Sgt. Edward J. Beamon.

I did not have a chance to read General Bradley's statement, but one paragraph says that by providing a prosthetic appliance, such as an artificial leg or arm, he seems to think the Government is giving you something out of the way and something extraordinary. But that is only replacing something which we have lost. And for that loss of a leg or an arm, by providing the prosthetic appliance, all that does is to take the place of that loss of limb. It cannot help you, more or less, in getting around, such as in getting on a bus or trolley car or streetcar or any public conveyance. An arm amputee or especially a high leg amputee, or any fellow who has lost the use of a leg has quite a difficult time in boarding a streetcar.

For a fellow in my condition, it is pretty hard for me to handle any kind of small change. So it is necessary for me to take a taxicab any place that I go. My income does not warrant that every time I go out, either to work or downtown, that I take a taxicab. And I think that is one of the reasons why an amputee needs an automobile in order to get around to work or downtown or to places he has to go.

Mr. MATHEWS. Even if he has to get someone else to drive it for him?

Sergeant BEAMON. That is right. Especially a boy who is blind, he needs a car just as much or more than an amputee. It gives him a chance to get out, if he has someone to drive the car for him, to take him for a ride, where riding on a streetcar or a bus is quite a handicap.

I think also, if General Bradley would accompany some of the amputees on their trips, such as riding on a bus or a streetcar, he might get to understand the situation more clearly. And perhaps if he were in a similar condition and had his arms more or less where he could not use them, he might also understand the situation more clearly.

Mr. MATHEWS. It seems to me a little bit illogical to say that a man who has been injured in such a way that some kind of prosthetic ap-

pliance would put him in a position to operate an automobile should be given an automobile, but one who has been further damaged so that he cannot operate that automobile is to be deprived of it, for the reason that he is more injured than the man who can get it.

Sergeant BEAMON. I think most of the amputees can handle their automobiles. I have had driving tests and I have given driving tests out at Walter Reed and I think they can pass the driver's test.

Mr. MATHEWS. The man who has a prosthetic appliance which allows him to drive his own car is in a far better position when he gets the car than the man whose injury would prevent him from driving the car, because, even after he gets it, he is put to the additional trouble of having someone drive it for him. But I do not see that that is any reason for depriving him of having the car.

Sergeant BEAMON. No.

Mr. MATHEWS. He still suffers more than the man who actually can drive the car himself; is that not correct?

Sergeant BEAMON. Yes.

Mr. MATHEWS. Are there any further questions of Sergeant Beamon?

The CHAIRMAN. You are being discharged today, are you not, Sergeant Beamon?

Sergeant BEAMON. I am discharged. I was discharged yesterday, but I stayed here in order to attend this meeting.

Mr. MATHEWS. Thank you very much, Sergeant.

The CHAIRMAN. And it is true, is it not, that a number of bilateral and even quadrilateral amputees drive cars?

Sergeant BEAMON. Oh, yes.

Mr. MATHEWS. Thank you, Sergeant.

Mr. MOSS, will you give your full name and address to the reporter?

STATEMENT OF GILFORD S. MOSS, HINES HOSPITAL, HINES, ILL.

Mr. MOSS. My name is Gilford S. Moss. I am now a patient at Hines Hospital, Hines, Ill. It is a veterans' hospital there.

Mr. MATHEWS. Mr. Moss, the committee will be very glad to hear what you might have to tell us.

Mr. MOSS. I would like to testify on behalf of the paralyzed veterans that are represented by the Paralyzed Veterans' Association of America. This is a group of veterans in the various Veterans' Administration paraplegic centers in the country who have banded together. We have certain opinions about the car bill.

In the first place, we believe that it is desirable that the veteran be permitted to pay any price over \$1,600 which is necessary for him to obtain the car of his choice. As you know, the increases in price since the enactment of Public Law 663 have placed certain automobiles beyond the reach of the veteran which were within his reach at that time.

We believe, secondly, that the time limit should be extended on the bill, for the reason that a great harm will be done to a certain group of men who would otherwise qualify but for the technicality of time limitation.

We are very vitally concerned with a third matter, in that under the present law it is required that the person, to receive the car from

the Administrator, shall be licensed by the licensing body of his State. This has reacted to the detriment of certain groups of men who are paralyzed. We call them quadriplegics. They are men who have their lesions so high that their arms and hands are affected, as well as their legs. Obviously, a man like that cannot drive an automobile so that he could be licensed by the States requiring drivers' licenses. He, nevertheless, is the most seriously injured of the paralyzed veterans. It is not possible for him to use a public means of conveyance. If he is to move about at all, and to have any mobility, he must have a private means of conveyance; and the automobile, of course, is the logical answer to that consideration.

These men vary in the amount of disability they have, and, merely because a man is a quadriplegic does not mean that in some instances he is unable to carry on some means of work, if he has a means of going to and from that work.

Not all of the men, of course, fall in that category. But all of the men, if they are to be rehabilitated at all, must have some means of leaving their homes or leaving the hospital and going out from time to time to take part in the affairs in which all of us want to take part.

I want to call the committee's attention to the curious situation that the Government pays us or provides a certain amount of money for an automobile, and, at the same time, charges a tax when the automobile is purchased.

And I would also like to call the committee's attention to the situation wherein the freight rates throughout the country cause inequities between people by reason of their geographical position with relation to the manufacturing center at Detroit, Mich. In other words, if you take the most extreme example, there are some veterans who live in Hawaii who could receive automobiles, but for the fact that the transportation costs are almost prohibitive. A less extreme example can be found in people living near Detroit as compared with people living in California or on the east coast. There are inequities which should be considered by the committee, and it is our recommendation that the law be so phrased as to absorb freight costs.

Mr. MATHEWS. The committee has those things under consideration. Thank you very much.

Are there any questions?

Mr. VAIL. I represent the Second District of Illinois, and I receive a letter stating that a committee was to visit Washington. Are you a member of that committee?

Mr. MOSS. Yes, sir.

Mr. VAIL. I have been looking forward to a visit from the committee. I rather expected to receive it last Monday.

Mr. MOSS. You are Mr. Vail?

Mr. VAIL. Yes.

Mr. MOSS. We had intended to come to see you, but we have difficulty in getting around. We have gone some places. Mrs. Rogers has been kind enough to talk to us, and we hoped to come to see you today.

Mr. VAIL. I had hoped to be of some service to you.

Mr. PRICE. I should like to say to Mr. Moss that he has made a very fine statement and certainly a clear presentation of his case on behalf of his comrades. I just wish the committee would have the time so

that he could tell you some of the conditions they are experiencing in the hospital because of the present retrenchment program—is that not a fact?

Mr. Moss. Yes, sir.

Mr. MATHEWS. Our time is limited. Perhaps some other time we may have that opportunity.

Mr. Donohue.

Mr. DONOHUE. No questions.

Mr. MATHEWS. Mr. Teague.

Mr. TEAGUE. Can you give us any information about boys who are partially paralyzed from head injuries?

Mr. Moss. No, I cannot. They are termed hemiplegics. They have some different effects than ours and the treatment given them is different. I am not in a position to tell you about them.

Mr. TEAGUE. Which of your group are receiving cars and which are not receiving cars?

Mr. Moss. In our group the paraplegics—that is the men who have lost the use of their legs—are receiving cars. The quadriplegics, where their arms and hands are affected and they cannot drive automobiles and be licensed by the State, are not receiving them.

Mr. MATHEWS. Thank you, sir.

Mr. Gore.

Mr. Gore, would you give your full name and address to the reporter?

**STATEMENT OF ALFRED L. GORE, VETERANS' HOSPITAL,
HINES, ILL.**

Mr. GORE. My name is Alfred L. Gore, Veterans' Hospital, Hines, Ill.

Mr. MATHEWS. Now, Mr. Gore, the committee would be very glad to hear you.

Mr. GORE. In view of my colleague's testimony here, I do not have too much to add, except that I would like to bring out one point, that the original bill, as set up last year, had provided \$1,600 for the amputee's cars. Now, I am not acquainted too well with the devices that the amputee needs to drive the car; but, in our circumstances, we require a full hand control, and the cost of those controls varies from \$150 to \$300.

Now, it might be very true that, under the present law, we can get a car with a hand control that would possibly suit our purposes, but, as a matter of fact, many of us have received a certain type of automobile earlier last year that is undoubtedly the finest car for our purposes. That is the car that has no clutch, and, therefore, allows us more latitude in driving the car.

Now, when you take a man who has to control a car with his hands solely, there is lack of coordination there many times, because he has to shift, he has to throttle, he has to brake, he has to clutch, and he has to steer the car all with his hands. And there are many times in the process of driving when his hands are not on the wheel. Furthermore, it means quite a bit to us to have a car that rides a little better, and we are able to get around quite a bit more.

Mr. MATHEWS. May I ask you this—are you through with that part of your statement?

Mr. GORE. Yes, sir.

Mr. MATHEWS. Just this question: Entirely aside from possession of the car giving luxury and convenience, is it your opinion, Mr. Gore, that the possession of a car to a man with a disability similar to yours would be actually a help in his rehabilitation?

Mr. GORE. Sir, I can answer that personally. I am one of the men at the hospital today who has permission of the manager to go out in the afternoons and work in an attempt to rehabilitate myself so that eventually I can leave the hospital and assume somewhat of a normal position in my community. Without the car that I have, I would find myself at a loss to do that.

At the present time, our rehabilitation program at Hines, Ill., points toward the use of the car and also the ability to be completely independent. In other words, I get into the car at the hospital myself, drive downtown in Chicago, get out of the car, carry my wheel chair with me, and enter an office building and work 4 hours an afternoon. And we have several other men in the hospital who do that.

I could not class the possession of an automobile as a luxury. It is a necessity to me if I am to conduct myself the way I have been doing.

Mr. MATHEWS. Would you consider the fact of your having that automobile as having destroyed your initiative, or as having increased your initiative from its possession?

Mr. GORE. I think the point on that question is missed by many men, because many of our paraplegics require constant stimulation, and, without the automobile to provide that, they would probably lie very stagnant in the hospital and spend the rest of their lives there. It is quite a healthy situation to see about 125 cars at the hospital and most of the men are able to get in those cars themselves and go to the ball games and do the things that most normal people do. I think it tends to make them quite a great deal more independent. When I am in the car I don't feel paralyzed. I am equal to any other man.

Mr. MATHEWS. Generally speaking, such a thing would increase the man's independence and initiative, rather than destroy it?

Mr. GORE. I think so. It gives much greater incentive to eventually restore the man's feeling of responsibility and independence in his community.

Mr. MATHEWS. Thank you, Mr. Gore, very much.

Mr. Tom Kennedy.

Would you give your full name and address to the reporter?

STATEMENT OF THOMAS J. KENNEDY, JR., BALTIMORE, MD.

Mr. KENNEDY. My name is Thomas J. Kennedy, Jr., 3213 Queen's Falls Parkway, Baltimore, Md.

Mr. MATHEWS. Mr. Kennedy, the committee will be very glad to hear what you have to say, and I want to ask you to raise your voice as much as you can so that everybody in the room can hear you.

Mr. KENNEDY. I heard General Bradley's speech, and I was most interested in the fact that he said the blind could not use an automobile because they could not drive it, and, when you go into rehabili-

tation, he described rehabilitation as being the only necessity for owning an automobile.

Naturally, you can rehabilitate a man only so far. I have a seeing-eye dog and it is a big help. It is much better, I think, than a cane. But I have seen three of my friends who have seeing-eye dogs refused jobs because they had the dogs. They were told that they could have the jobs if they could get rid of their dogs. Of course, they refused, because the dogs were of much more value to them than the jobs.

Getting to the question of the automobiles, I was a salesman for a stationery company before going into the service. When I first came out of the service in 1944 I took a job with a manufacturing company as a salesman, selling toys. Of course, I had to get around to see the people. I got around with my dog, but it was a slow process. Then I rented a car and my wife drove me around. That was fine, but it was too expensive. So I cut it out altogether because automobiles at that time were so high.

So I took a job selling stationery. I had to call on accounts. Most of them were congregated downtown. It was fine. But it is impossible for me to get around any distance to see people with a dog or a cane, or to get anywhere without a car.

I know a lot of blind veterans who do nothing but sit at home. They do not want to work because they do not want to go out. When they cross the street they have to be helped. There is no blind man who is strictly independent. I don't care who he is. A car will not make him any less dependent than he is, it is true. But when he comes home at night he doesn't feel like climbing out and going out socially if he has to go on a streetcar. You have to go down and walk four or five or six blocks to get a streetcar, and push through the crowd and get on the streetcar. That takes all the enjoyment out of the thing.

A car, in the case of a blind man, is a necessity. He can't drive it, it is true. But the married blind men—naturally, they are not all married, but they have sisters or mothers to drive them around. And the married men have their wives to drive them back and forth. But a man who is not married, he has to use a car, and if he uses a taxicab enough it would pay him to get someone to drive for him. There is the question of getting a driver. Naturally you have that. But most of the men have either a relative or a wife to drive the car for them.

I have spoken to some veterans who have said that they don't want a car. If a man is a writer or something of that kind, and didn't want to go out, that is a different matter. But he would get a little more social activity. You can understand how a man feels when he sits around all day and doesn't do anything. If he wants a job, he certainly would appreciate it much more to be able to get back and forth to that job in an easier way than going all the way stumbling up curbs and taking a chance crossing streets.

The general said that one of the reasons he would not prefer cars for blind veterans is that he thinks it would make them dependent. There is no blind veteran who is not dependent on someone. That is just one thing that can't be avoided.

Mr. MATHEWS. Are there any questions? If not, thank you very much.

Commander Floyd.

Commander Floyd, you are representing the Regular Veterans Association.

STATEMENT OF COMMANDER W. M. FLOYD, REGULAR VETERANS ASSOCIATION

Commander FLOYD. My name is W. M. Floyd, of the Regular Veterans Association.

Mr. Chairman, Madam Rogers, and members of the committee—

Mr. MATHEWS. I think that you have several statements in the record now, Commander.

Commander FLOYD. That is right.

There are a couple of things in one bill that I would like to see amended, particularly in Mrs. Rogers' bill, H. R. 2741. On page 2, line 5, change "legs" to "feet." Strike out the entirety of line 6—"at or above the ankle."

Line 7, on page 2, instead of "arms" use "hands."

Strike out the entirety of line 8.

On line 13, put "\$15 or less;" and strike out all of line 13 from "to such an extent" on through 14 and 15 and 16.

This is a perfect bill, and I believe it will fit all veterans who have served at any time, and it will not have to be brought back to Congress to be amended to fit some veterans who have become disabled in line of duty safeguarding our country.

I believe when this comes before the full committee I would like to be heard in the drafting of any bill which you might report out.

Mr. MATHEWS. That will be entirely up to Mrs. Rogers.

Commander FLOYD. I have no further comments.

Mr. MATHEWS. Are there any questions?

The CHAIRMAN. Pardon me, I didn't quite hear what you said about me.

Mr. MATHEWS. He said that he wanted to be heard before the full committee, and I told him that that would be entirely up to you.

The CHAIRMAN. Probably the chairman of the subcommittee will take what he likes of the bill, and when it comes out to the full committee it will be the Judge Mathews bill.

Commander FLOYD. These boys who appeared before you should be commended. They are just as much affected as those who appeared before, and they should be considered in this bill the same as any other veteran.

Mr. MATHEWS. Thank you, Commander.

Are there any other persons here who would like to testify before the committee before we adjourn?

STATEMENT OF WALT DAVIS, CORRY, PA.

Mr. DAVIS. Gentlemen, I am very bitter—

Mr. MATHEWS. Did you give your name and address to the reporter?

Mr. DAVIS. Walt Davis, R. D. 3, Corry, Pa.

I am very bitter against the Veterans' Administration. There is no use mincing about it. I was out of the service, and the result is that I am back in the service, for the very simple reason that I do not have the money. Most of us did not come from rich families. Yet we were forced into the Army.

Mr. MATHEWS. May I interrupt you there? Do you understand, Mr. Davis, that this hearing is on a particular bill?

Mr. DAVIS. Yes, sir; I do.

Mr. MATHEWS. Which has to do only with the furnishing of automobiles?

Mr. DAVIS. Yes.

Mr. MATHEWS. Will you please confine your statements to that subject matter?

Mr. DAVIS. What I am driving at, sir, is that we don't have the money to furnish automobiles to get us places. I don't know—I have run across a lot of guys. I have discussed it with people, and they think that we, as arm amputees, shouldn't be forced to go out and work, and all that, in order to earn transportation to get places.

As I said, I am from a poor family. I have to earn my way in order to buy an automobile. I do not get enough money from the Government to save to buy that. I can't get a job because I can't get to the job when I do have it.

I guess that is just about all. I just thought somebody who had an arm off should come up and give their point of view.

Mr. MATHEWS. We are very glad to hear from you.

The CHAIRMAN. He is one of the men from Walter Reed Hospital.

Mr. MATHEWS. Thank you very much, sir.

Has any other member of the subcommittee anything to offer, Mrs. Rogers?

The CHAIRMAN. I think not. Perhaps we could have an executive session sometime and some other witnesses could appear.

Mr. MATHEWS. We can take care of that; yes.

If there is nothing further to come before the committee, the meeting stands adjourned.

(Whereupon, at 11:50 a. m., the hearing was adjourned.)

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