

2301 House Office Bldg.
Washington, D. C. 20515
April 9, 1965

YOUR CONGRESSMAN REPORTS

SOCIAL SECURITY AMENDMENTS OF 1965 passed the House a few days ago. It is an omnibus bill of 300 pages, containing many provisions concerning social security and welfare payments. Some of its provisions are good, while others are, to say the least, doubtful, but it is another instance of the take-it-or-leave-it propositions that we meet with under a Rule which would not permit amendments. The following, in brief, are the major provisions.

COMPULSORY HOSPITALIZATION plan provides for partial payment of hospital services and some posthospital services, financed by a payroll tax, similar to Social Security.

VOLUNTARY PLAN FOR PHYSICIANS' and surgical services, laboratory tests and treatments, dressings, etc., financed by \$3.00 monthly premiums the first two years. Insurance companies would write this insurance, and a State would also be able to buy it for its public assistance recipients.

KERR-MILLS PROGRAM would be amended to the elderly poor who are self-supporting, but who would be made charity cases by a major health problem. At present, only those receiving welfare payments are eligible. The blind and disabled would also be brought under the program. The amount of federal matching funds would be increased.

CHILD HEALTH AND CRIPPLED CHILDREN would have authorizations increased over current amounts.

SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS would be increased by 7 percent, with a minimum increase of \$4.00 per month for workers retired at age 65.

CHILDRENS' BENEFITS would be continued after age 18, and up to age 22, provided the child is a full-time student in a school or college.

WIDOWS would have the option of receiving benefits beginning at age 60 at a reduced amount. The present minimum age is 62.

DISABILITY BENEFITS would start after a five months waiting period, rather than the present six months, and such payments would be paid for the duration of the total disability, if less than permanent. Presently, benefits are paid only for total permanent disability.

CERTAIN PERSONS AGE 72 or over, not presently eligible for social security benefits, would become eligible for a basic benefit of \$35.00, provided they have a minimum of three quarters of coverage since the beginning of the program in 1937.

OTHER PROVISIONS relate to liberalizing the earned income limitation, wife's and widow's benefits for divorced women, adoption of child by retired workers, certain exemptions, minor coverages, proofs, credits and other minor matters.

The bill is now in the Senate, and is, of course, subject to change, but if you would like to have a more detailed summary, please drop me a card and I will forward same to you.

RECENT VISITORS TO WASHINGTON were [redacted] both of Lufkin, [redacted] of Chireno, [redacted] of Jacksonville, [redacted] of Conroe, and [redacted] of Huntsville.