CONGRESSIONAL RECORD

Proceedings and Debates of the 85th Congress

SENATE

BILL: S. 1864
ACTION: Reported

DATE: July 1, 1958
PAGE: 11555 - 56

INCREASE IN MEMBERSHIP OF BOARD OF APPEALS OF THE PATENT OFFICE; INCREASED SALARIES—REPORT OF A COMMITTEE (S. REPT. NO. 1783)

Mr. O'MAHONEY. Mr. President, on behalf of the Committee on the Judiciary, I report favorably with amendments, and recommend the passage of Senate bill 1864, a bill to authorize an increase in the membership of the Board of Appeals of the Patent Office, to provide increased salaries for certain officers and employees of the Patent Office, and for other purposes.

I make this statement because, when the bill was discussed in the Judiciary Committee, inasmuch as it involved the salaries of certain officials serving with the Patent Office, we were instructed to consult the Committee on Post Office and Civil Service, of which the Senator from South Carolina [Mr. JOHNSTON], who is now in the Chamber, is the chairman.

During the past 8 years, there has been a growing backlog of undisposed of appeals in patent cases before the Board of Appeals.

These appeals have been filed at the average rate of 5,000 a year, but they have not been disposed of more rapidly, on the average, than 4,500 a year. The result has been that, whereas the number of appeals on hand at the beginning of the year 1950 numbered 3,705, those on hand at the beginning of 1958 numbered 7,183.

In the interest of promoting the intelligent administration of the Patent Office and the early disposition of patent appeals, it was felt desirable to increase the membership of the Board from 9 to 15, and to make an adjustment with respect to salaries. It was because of this feature, that the Judiciary Committee felt it important that the Committee on Post Office and Civil Service should consider the subject. I am advised that the committee has done so at its regular session this morning.

I invite comment from the Senator from South Carolina.

Mr. JOHNSTON of South Carolina. Mr. President, it is true that the Committee on Post Office and Civil Service considered this subject this morning at its regular meeting. It did so at the suggestion of the Committee on the Judiciary, which had referred the subject to us for consideration, inasmuch as it had something to do with the regulation of salaries, and involved certain additional super-grades.

We have studied the bill, and approve it in toto.

In the bill increasing salaries and establishing certain additional supergrades the House did not approve of as many supergrades as did the Senate. If it had, there would be more supergrades provided for in the present law.

We think it is necessary that the Patent Office have additional help to handle the great backlog of cases. I also learned of the situation in the Judiciary Committee, where I happen to be a member of the subcommittee dealing with patents. We gave full approval to the bill.

Mr. O'MAHONEY. I thank the Senator from South Carolina.

In submitting the report recommending the expansion of the Permanent Board of Appeals from 9 to 15, I wish the RECORD to show that the measure has the approval of both the Judiciary Committee and the Committee on Post Office and Civil Service.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The report will be received, and the bill will be placed on the calendar.