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Senator Daniel K. Inouye Papers

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news from

Senator DANIEL K. INOUE

topic:

date: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

release date:

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Inouye said because of the bombing Kahoolawe "is now being rapidly destroyed and rendered unfit for human habitation. This erosion is an unforgivable waste of resources in a state where land is at a premium."

Inouye also said residents on nearby Maui are upset about the shelling's effects.

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The award initially supports the first two years of a long-term program on the breeding and mass propagation of Milk Fish.

Principal investigators for the project are Dr. Colin Nash, Dr. Ching Ming Kuo, and Guy N. Rothwell, Jr.

The value of the contract is \$250,000.

USAID recognizes that the dwindling resources of seed fish in the less developed countries seriously limits maintaining or increasing their traditional dependence on fish for their rich supply of animal protein.

Milk Fish feature largely in the diets of the people of Southeast Asia. New Resources have to be developed and these can only be achieved by controlled breeding and hatchery production, a technique presently under development at Oceanic.

To date, the Milk Fish has proved a difficult fish to breed. The Oceanic Foundation has been awarded the contract because of its long-time experience and breeding success with another brackish-water subsistence food-fish, the Mullet.

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WASHINGTON, D.C. -- Senator Daniel K. Inouye has proposed the federal government spend up to \$200 million over the next three years to bring adequate public health care to immigrants to the United States.

"The New Americans Health Service Act of 1975" would apportion the money to establish public health, counselling and educational programs aimed at the unique problems of immigrants among states according to their number of aliens.

"Immigrants often come from regions where exposure to communicable diseases is universal. For them, life in the United States, a new country, is made up of emotional and economic stress that complicates their health problems," Inouye said.

Inouye noted many immigrants are unaccustomed to preventive health care and, "painfully aware of the high costs of medical care," do not seek care until their health problems reach "crisis proportions."

In Hawaii, immigrants and American Samoans represent the highest percentage of patients for leprosy, tuberculosis, pediculosis, underweight children, mental health and congenital malformation. Aliens account for six per cent of Hawaii's population. The rate of immigration in Hawaii as a percentage of the population is more than twice that of any other state.

Inouye said over 70 per cent of immigrants reside in six states. "We have a situation in which a few states are being asked to bear a disproportionate share of a national responsibility," Inouye continued.

Inouye believes that since it is national policy to allow immigrants, "We should not desert them" after arrival.

Under the bill, up to \$50 million would be appropriated for immigrant health services in fiscal 1976. This figure would rise to \$70 million in 1977 and the \$80 million in 1978.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE - JANUARY 15, 1975

WASHINGTON, D.C.- A series of bills aimed at aiding the nation's elderly will be introduced in the 94th Congress by Senator Daniel K. Inouye.

Inouye's package of bills would allow Medicare patients to be treated by a clinical psychologist without being supervised by a physician, grant tax credits to businesses that retain or hire elderly employees, and guarantee Social Security benefits to the survivor of a legally defective marriage if the survivor entered the marriage in good faith and the marriage lasted at least five years.

"The role of the elderly in American society has been drastically altered over the past years," Inouye said in a statement prepared for delivery to the Senate. "For many of our older citizens, retirement from our work force has not met the promise of comfort and dignity."

Inouye said the elderly did not share the prosperity other citizens enjoyed until the beginning of the recession. "The aged have remained a pocket of poverty with little means of helping themselves," Inouye continued. "The economic difficulties facing our elderly populations are often accompanied by emotional, psychological and physical problems."

One of Inouye's bills is designed to make it easier for senior citizens to get help with their emotional and psychological problems. The proposal would allow Medicare recipients to be treated by a clinical psychologist without a doctor's "prescription" and subsequent supervision.

Presently, the elderly may be reimbursed for this care only if the psychologist is directly supervised by a physician. In part due to this restriction, the elderly comprise 10 percent of the population, but receive only two percent of out-patient mental health services, according to Senator.

"It seems patently unfair to permit Federal employees to select the mental health practitioner of their choice and refuse our senior citizens the same privilege," Inouye said, referring to recent Congressional action removing the medical supervision requirement of the Federal Employees Health Benefits program.

Inouye said, "It is a logical assumption that mental health experts could be most helpful to those in the twilight of their lives who must cope with the dwindling circle of their family and friends, lack of meaningful occupation, anxiety for the future and often the loss of their most cherished possessions."

Inouye also introduced legislation to provide tax incentives to businesses to retain those older employees they might otherwise force to retire and to hire older persons "whose potential productivity is quite high."

"I believe this measure can serve to stimulate necessary employment in our economy by putting back to work elderly men and women who have a great deal to contribute and to do this in a fiscally responsible manner," Inouye said.

Inouye believes revenue lost by offering financial incentives would be offset by lower welfare and public assistance costs and by the taxes the newly employed workers would pay.

Inouye said by offering financial incentives to businesses that hire older workers, the government will not be encouraging them to displace younger employees.

The final bill in Inouye's package would guarantee Social Security benefits to persons who otherwise might lose them because their spouses had previous, undisclosed marriages.

The bill would pay full benefits to the survivor of a legally defective marriage if the survivor entered the marriage innocently and in good faith and lived with the insured spouse for at least five years.

"Under our present laws," Inouye noted, "innocent individuals are suffering due to the gross deceit and deliberate misrepresentations of those they trusted and with whom they entered into a marriage they believed legal."

The New York Times recently reported on the plight of a 73-year-old woman who lost her benefits as it was learned her husband of 40 years had been married 17 years earlier in Europe. The first wife, who never again saw her husband after he emigrated to the United States in 1921, automatically was entitled to the benefits because he never obtained a divorce.

"Scores of women lost their Social Security benefits this past year under these tragic circumstances," Inouye said. "Only legislation citing this specific problem can restore to them what is rightfully due."

NEWS FROM

Senator DANIEL K. INOUE

topic:

date: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE - JANUARY 28, 1975

release date:

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- Scheduled hearings on Hawaiian land claims have been postponed temporarily, Senator Daniel K. Inouye (D-Hawaii) announced today.

Inouye said Senator Henry Jackson (D-Washington), Chairman of the Senate Interior Committee, advised him the hearings were being postponed due to the urgency of Congressional action on the nation's economic and energy needs. Jackson's action came after the Senate leadership cancelled the Lincoln's Birthday recess in order to concentrate on economic problems.

The hearings before the Committee, scheduled for February 10, 1975 in Honolulu and February 11, 1975 in Kona, were to have been held during the recess.

news from

Senator DANIEL K. INOUE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE - January 15, 1975

WASHINGTON, D. C. - A bill to restore special education benefits to military dependents has been introduced by Senator Daniel K. Inouye.

Inouye's bill would restore benefits that handicapped dependents had formerly received through the Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Uniformed Services (CHAMPUS). Benefits were discontinued December 31, 1973, because the Defense Department claimed there was no legal basis for providing them.

CHAMPUS officials said the benefits were educational rather than medical and, therefore, did not fall under its mandate. CHAMPUS denied the program's cost was the reason for its curtailment.

Inouye's bill specifically would amend the program's mandate to guarantee that handicapped children would be eligible for special educational benefits.

Handicapped children include those who are hard of hearing, deaf, speech impaired, visually handicapped, emotionally disturbed, mentally retarded, crippled or otherwise in need of special education and related services.

Inouye said the Department's decision to curtail CHAMPUS put a burden not only on the affected families, but also on the schools they were attending and the public schools to which they may be forced to transfer.

In remarks on the Senate floor, Inouye said, "If these students. . . are forced to discontinue their education prematurely, or if they are placed in an average public school classroom which does not provide them with the special services their disabilities require, it will result in a rapid regression of their condition."

Particularly hard hit, Inouye said, was a private school on Pearl Harbor Naval Base that provided special education for military dependents with learning disabilities.

The school, the Armed Forces Special Education and Training School (ASSETS), received 70 per cent of its financial support from CHAMPUS. Inouye said it "has been under serious financial strain" since losing its funding.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE - JANUARY 15, 1975

WASHINGTON, D.C.-- For years Members of Congress have been insulated from the constantly rising cost of postage by franking privileges that allow them to mail postage-free. Now, if two bills to be introduced by Senator Daniel K. Inouye are passed, Congress will share its bargain rates with its constituents.

Inouye has proposed that taxpayers be allowed to mail their federal income tax returns postage-free. In addition, he has called for the issuance of a one-cent stamp for use on letters addressed to Members of Congress.

In introducing the bill for postage-free income tax payments, Inouye noted personal income taxes account for most of the government's daily operating funds. This year, he said, some 83 million Americans will pay \$125 billion in personal income taxes.

Given the government's dependency on individual taxpayers, Inouye said, "Congress has an obligation to make it as easy as possible for Americans to pay their taxes."

Inouye said postage-free tax payments would be "a small token of appreciation" from the government to the people.

Inouye said the Congress mails postage-free at taxpayer expense. "It seems only fair to me that we extend to our constituents the opportunity to share once a year the privilege their taxes allow us to enjoy year-round," he said.

Inouye also referred to Congress' free mail service in introducing his second bill authorizing the one-cent stamp.

"In view of the franking privileges available to Members of Congress, this measure would effectively equalize the treatment of mail from both the Congress and its constituency," Inouye said.

Inouye's legislation would authorize the U.S. Post Office to issue a one-cent stamp good on letters up to four ounces addressed to a Member of Congress. It would also reimburse the Post Office for any lost revenue.

Inouye introduced the bill because "the essence of our democratic system is the continuing operation of a two-way communication system between the people of the country and their elected representatives."

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topic: Federal Malpractice Insurance Proposed

date:

release date: FOR RELEASE FRIDAY A.M., January 17, 1975

WASHINGTON, D.C. - A federal system to guarantee compensation for injuries sustained as a result of medical treatment would be created under legislation introduced today by Senator Daniel K. Inouye.

Under Inouye's plan, an injured person automatically would be compensated by the government for injuries received without having to go to court to prove negligence by his physician. The system would be similar to the no-fault auto insurance programs now in effect in many states.

"The Medical Injury Compensation Act" would allow health providers—physicians and hospitals—to participate voluntarily in the system which would protect them from damage claims in a malpractice suit. Providers would pay annual premiums to the federal government for coverage. Patients would be compensated for injuries received from treatment by the provider.

The legislation will be referred to the Senate Labor and Public Welfare Subcommittee on Health chaired by Senator Edward M. Kennedy, D-Mass., co-author of the bill.

The bill comes as both the number and size of malpractice suits are increasing rapidly. And as a result of this, many insurance companies are dropping their malpractice coverage or raising premiums drastically. Currently, only six companies offer malpractice insurance, and premiums for high-risk specialists such as neurosurgeons and orthopedic surgeons can reach \$20,000 a year. Last week, the company that insures 27,000 of New York City's 35,000 doctors threatened to drop all malpractice coverage.

Senator Inouye, in a statement prepared for the Senate floor, said, "I believe it is imperative that action be taken to avert what could be a disaster for health care and health care providers in this country."

Inouye said his plan would guarantee early compensation for injuries, whereas now fewer than half of all malpractice claims are settled within 18 months. Legal fees which often take 30 to 50 per cent of a plaintiff's award of insurance premiums would be eliminated. Under Inouye's plan, injured persons may either seek compensation from the plan or go to court.

The legislation seeks to guarantee that no-fault protection would not be extended to incompetent health providers. Providers would have to meet licensure and recertification standards to participate in the program. Any participant who accumulated numerous or serious claims would be subject to administrative review and dismissal from the program.

"For the most part," according to Inouye, "the cost of malpractice insurance is simply passed on to the physician's patients, thereby raising the cost of health care." The Senator believes his plan will contribute to a decline in the long-run costs of medical treatment by paring unnecessary medical services and excessive legal costs.

Inouye admitted malpractice is a complex problem and his legislation probably would not be a "cure-all." But, he said, "Action in this area cannot be taken too soon and will go far towards facilitating the better utilization of our nation's health resources."