

February 23, 1951.
Passed on File.

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House File 543
By SOCIAL SECURITY COMMITTEE.

Passed House, Date
Vote: Ayes..... Nays.....
Passed Senate, Date.....
Vote: Ayes..... Nays.....
Approved

A BILL FOR

An Act to amend chapter two hundred forty-one (241), Code 1950, relating to aid to the blind.

Be It Enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Iowa:

1 Section 1. That all of subsection two (2) of section
2 two hundred forty-one point two (241.2), Code 1950, be
3 stricken.

1 Sec. 2. That the words "except as a patient in a
2 medical institution for treatment for other than tuberculosis
3 or mental diseases and is not an inmate of a private institution
4 for tuberculosis or mental disease" be added following the
5 word "institution" in line one (1) of subsection four (4)
6 of section two hundred forty-one point two (241.2), Code 1950.

1 Sec. 3. That all of subsection five (5) of section
2 two hundred forty-one point two (241.2), Code 1950, be stricken.

1 Sec. 4. That the words following "individual" in line
2 three (3) of section two hundred forty-one point three (241.3)
3 Code 1950, be deleted, and the following words be added:
4 "with all resources to be considered except the first fifty
5 dollars per month of earned income which shall be disregarded

6 when computing the grant of assistance under the rules,
7 regulations and standards adopted by the state board.”

1 Sec. 5. That the sentence, “Such application shall
2 contain a statement of the amount of property, both personal
3 and real, in which the applicant has an interest, and of all
4 sources and amounts of income which he may have, either in
5 existence or expectancy, at the time of the filing of an
6 application, and such other information as may be required
7 by the state board.”, in lines six (6) to thirteen (13),
8 inclusive, of section two hundred forty-one point six (241.6),
9 Code, 1950, be stricken.

1 Sec. 6. That following the word “ophthalmologist” in
2 line one (1) and line three (3) of section two hundred
3 forty-one point eight (241.8), Code 1950, a comma (,) be
4 inserted and the words, “a physician skilled in the diseases
5 of the eyes or by an optometrist” be added, and that the
6 words, “examining ophthalmologist” in lines five (5) and six
7 (6) be deleted, and the word, “examiner” be inserted in lieu
8 thereof.

1 Sec. 7. That the word “ophthalmologist” in line ten
2 (10) of section two hundred forty-one point nine (241.9), Code
3 1950, be deleted, and the word “examiner” be inserted in lieu
4 thereof.

1 Sec. 8. That section two hundred forty-one point
2 eighteen (241.18), Code 1950, be stricken.

1 Sec. 9. That the words, “and approved by the state

- 2 board" be deleted in lines eighteen (18) and nineteen (19)
- 3 of section two hundred forty-one point twenty (241.20), Code
- 4 1950.

EXPLANATION OF H. F. 543

The legislative changes contained in the attached bill represent the results of a study conducted jointly between the county and state departments of social welfare. It is believed the passage of the Act will contribute substantially to a more efficient and effective administration of Chapter 241, Code 1950, under the jurisdiction of the State Board of Social Welfare. The reasons for the recommended changes are cited below:

Section 1. Section 241.2, Code 1950

Subsection 2. It is our opinion that we would have better administration in public assistance programs and would actually save money if the eligibility requirement pertaining to "citizenship" was deleted from the aid to the blind act. We do not believe that such a change would mean an increase in the rolls, but we do believe that removal of this eligibility requirement would result in a saving in administration expense.

Under the present writing of our law, it is usually necessary for the county in which an applicant applies to meet the total financial responsibility of caring for the individual from local funds when the requirement of citizenship does not make a grant of assistance possible.

Sec. 2. Section 241.2, Code 1950

Subsection 4. This change is requested in the state law to enable the state board of social welfare to take advantage of certain cases where matching is now available as a result of the amendments of the Social Security Act of 1950. Our present law prohibits payment in all instances to recipients residing in tax-supported institutions.

Sec. 3. Section 241.2, Code 1950

Subsection 5. The state department of social welfare has encountered no difficulties regarding persons soliciting alms and concealing income from this source. If the recommendations for amendments to this section are accepted, the subsections should be renumbered accordingly.

Sec. 4. Section 241.3, Code 1950

To conform with the 1950 amendments made in the Social Security Act Title X which requires the state plan to exempt fifty dollars of *monthly earned* income of each blind recipient of assistance.

Sec. 5. Section 241.6, Code 1950

Through experience, it has been found that the method of securing specific information on the various applicants for assistance varies from time to time; and as a result of this variation, the suggested change would make it possible to permit the state board of social welfare to establish policies as they felt necessary to provide the information in determining eligibility for applicants of assistance.

Sec. 6. Section 241.8, Code 1950

This change is requested to enable the State Board of Social Welfare to develop its state plan to conform with the Social Security Act Amendments of 1950.

Sec. 7. Section 241.9, Code 1950

To conform with the 1950 amendments of the Social Security Act.

Sec. 8. Section 241.18, Code 1950

This section provides for recovery of assistance and benefits paid under the Aid to the Needy Blind Act. However, recovery is possible only when there is an estate created for the deceased recipient and our right of recovery comes only "after deducting the exemptions now allowed by law" and after expenses of burial and last sickness have been paid. As a result, state recovery for blind assistance and benefits paid has been negligible. However, because of this section, it has been necessary through accounting procedures to keep individual accounts for every blind assistance recipient. The cost of keeping these accounts is many times the amount recovered under this section.

Sec. 9. Section 241.20, Code 1950

At present, the state department prepares a budget for each of the ninety-nine (99) counties and sends it to them for their approval or adjustment. It is then returned to the state department for formal approval and is then processed. As the section already provides that in the event the amount appropriated is insufficient, additional appropriations shall be appropriated by the county boards of supervisors, we do not believe that the budget prepared for approval by the state board has much meaning. However, our present policy is not of much benefit to either the county or state departments but is a costly procedure.