

Calendar No. 587

69TH CONGRESS }
1st Session }

SENATE

{ REPORT
No. 585

PROVIDING AN ADDITIONAL WING TO THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA JAIL

APRIL 5 (calendar day, APRIL 13), 1926.—Ordered to be printed

Mr. CAPPER, from the Committee on the District of Columbia, submitted the following

REPORT

[To accompany H. R. 10204]

The Committee on the District of Columbia, to whom was referred the bill (H. R. 10204) to provide an additional wing to the District of Columbia Jail, having considered the same, report favorably thereon with the recommendation that the bill do pass with the following amendments:

Strike out all of line 3 and insert in lieu thereof the words "That the Commissioners of the District of Columbia be authorized".

Line 5 insert the words "not less than" after the word "accommodate."

Line 6 strike out the period and insert the words "at a cost not exceeding \$300,000."

The object of the bill as amended is to authorize the Commissioners of the District of Columbia to enter into contracts for the erection of a new dormitory wing of two stories at the District Jail in Washington to accommodate not less than 100 beds to each floor, at a cost not exceeding \$300,000.

Arrests and convictions within the District of Columbia have increased so rapidly in recent years that the District Jail is constantly filled far beyond its original capacity. The result is that short-term prisoners are crowded in cells where they live penned up for days at a time without exercise, and where they must sleep at night on insanitary, straw-filled pallets thrown on a floor littered with filth and refuse. For instance, in a cell 7 by 5 feet in dimensions, and a small adjoining lavatory, there were recently confined seven inmates, four of whom had to sleep on the floor. The cell was originally designed to accommodate two men. In other cells of practically the same size there were six, seven, eight, and even nine men. Some

idea of the increased burden put upon the capacity of the jail is gained from the fact that the number of prisoners cared for in the fiscal year ending June 30, 1921, was 3,804, while for the year ending June 30, 1926, approximately 12,000 prisoners will be confined to the jail. Under such conditions it is impossible to keep the jail in sanitary conditions and it constitutes a serious menace to public health, as well as a breeding ground for crime through too close association of all manner and degree of offenders against the law.

The District Commissioners, based upon an investigation made by the municipal architect, estimate that an appropriation not exceeding \$300,000 will enable the building of sufficient additional accommodations. Such appropriation has the approval of the Director of the Budget. The commissioners' letter is appended and made a part of this report.

COMMISSIONERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA,

Washington, April 1, 1926.

Hon. ARTHUR CAPPER,

*Chairman Committee on the District of Columbia,
United States Senate, Washington, D. C.*

SIR: The Commissioners of the District of Columbia desire to submit the following on House bill 10204, Sixty-ninth Congress, first session, entitled "An act providing an additional wing to the District Jail," which passed the House on March 22, and which is now pending before your committee.

The object of this bill is to provide additional housing facilities at the District Jail, which have long been needed due to the overcrowded condition of the present building. An investigation made by the municipal architect indicates that in order to provide adequately for the needs of the situation the sum of \$300,000 will be necessary.

The commissioners believe that the proposed legislation should be favorably considered when amended so as to provide for the authorization of an appropriation of not exceeding \$300,000, to be payable in like manner as other appropriations for the District of Columbia. They suggest the bill be amended by striking out all the matter after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

"That the Commissioners of the District of Columbia be, and they are hereby, authorized to construct an additional building at the District Jail at a cost of not exceeding \$300,000, to be payable in like manner as other appropriations for the District of Columbia."

The proposed legislation was submitted to the Director of the Budget, who advises as follows:

"The purpose of this proposed legislation is to provide adequate additional housing facilities at the District Jail. Such expenditure as may be necessary to accomplish this purpose would not be in conflict with the financial program of the President."

Very truly yours,

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA,

By CUNO H. RUDOLPH, *President.*

