

PROVIDING PENALTIES FOR ESCAPING FROM FEDERAL
PENAL AND CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTIONS

JANUARY 31, 1927.—Referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed

Mr. GRAHAM, from the Committee on the Judiciary, submitted the
following

REPORT

[To accompany H. R. 15975]

The Committee on the Judiciary, to whom was referred the bill H. R. 15975, after consideration reports the same favorably and recommends that the bill do pass.

This bill was introduced at the request of the Attorney General, and the letters which are printed herewith and made a part of this report set forth the necessity for the enactment of this legislation.

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE,
Washington, D. C., January 10, 1927.

Hon. GEORGE S. GRAHAM,
*Chairman Committee on the Judiciary,
House of Representatives.*

MY DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: I have examined the copy of H. R. 15975, providing for the punishment of persons escaping from Federal penal and correctional institutions, which bill was introduced by you at the request of the department, and I am taking this opportunity to thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

The need for the enactment of this legislation is becoming more urgent each day. Operations at the Chillicothe Reformatory have been seriously hampered because of the fact that no penalty is imposed for escape from that institution. First offenders sent to the reformatory, in many cases for a year and a day, may with impunity effect an escape from the institution, and, if successful in evading recapture, remain at liberty without any penalty whatever being imposed.

With the opening of the Federal Industrial Institution for Women, which is contemplated in a few months, even more serious difficulties will be encountered. Similar legislation has been adopted in most of the States; therefore if the proposed legislation should become a law it would only provide the Federal Government with the same protection which is now afforded the States. I shall be

grateful to you, therefore, if you will do what you can to push this legislation with a view to securing enactment at this session of Congress.

Respectfully,

JNO. G. SARGENT,
Attorney General.

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE,
Washington, D. C., January 29, 1927.

HON. GEORGE S. GRAHAM,
*Chairman Committee on the Judiciary,
House of Representatives.*

MY DEAR MR. GRAHAM: In the Federal penal and correctional institutions under the control of the Department of Justice there are some 7,000 prisoners. The penal institutions at Atlanta and Leavenworth are surrounded by walls, while that at McNeil Island has no walls. At the latter institution armed guards are stationed in 30-foot towers. The towers are so spaced as to command a clear view of the institution buildings and constitute the means of control when prisoners are out of the cells.

At the United States Industrial Reformatory at Chillicothe, Ohio, there are no armed guards, and the only means of preventing escapes is the thorough method of discipline and such moral control as the officials are able to maintain over the inmates.

The Federal Industrial Institution for Women at Alderson, W. Va., is now under construction. It is expected that some prisoners will be sent to this institution during the month of February. There are no walls, and no armed guards will be provided at Alderson.

At the Alderson road camp, which is operated under the immediate jurisdiction of the State of West Virginia, Federal prisoners are engaged in building roads within the institution grounds and performing other assigned duties. There are but a few unarmed guards placed in charge of these prisoners, and the only means of preventing escapes is through treatment of prisoners and such disciplinary measures as the guards are able to enforce.

During the past two years the escapes at the several institutions have been as follows:

	1925	1926	1927
Atlanta.....	13	7	6
Leavenworth.....	7	3	4
McNeil Island.....	2	2	-----
Chillicothe.....	-----	6	9
Alderson.....	-----	27	13
National Training School for Boys.....	19	37	28
Total.....	41	82	60

The escapes enumerated above have occurred in connection with institutions under the immediate control of the Federal Government. We have no statistics available as to the number of Federal prisoners who have escaped from State and county institutions or while in the custody of the marshals of the several judicial districts.

Respectfully,

JNO. G. SARGENT, *Attorney General.*