

SENATE No. 637

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

SENATE, April 25, 1951.

The committee on Public Welfare, to whom was referred the petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 450) of Michael A. Flanagan that the Director of the Division of the Blind be authorized to disregard certain income and resources of applicants for and recipients of aid to the blind in determining their needs; the petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 460) of George W. Stanton for legislation relative to the aiding of blind persons by the Division of the Blind; and the report of the special commission established (under Chapter 42 of the Resolves of 1949 and revived and continued under Chapters 1 and 62 of the Resolves of 1950) to make a study of certain matters relating to the blind (House, No. 1951), report (in part, on House, No. 1951) the accompanying bill (Senate, No. 637).

For the committee,

LESLIE B. CUTLER.

APPENDIX B.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year One Thousand Nine Hundred and Fifty-One.

AN ACT RELATIVE TO BLIND AND VISUALLY HANDICAPPED
PERSONS, INCLUDING CHILDREN.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Chapter 69 of the General Laws is
2 hereby amended by striking out section 13, as appear-
3 ing in the Tercentenary Edition, and inserting in place
4 thereof the following five sections: —

5 *Section 13.* The supervisor of the bureau of medical
6 care shall co-ordinate general medical care and medical
7 eye care for the needy blind persons, including children,
8 of the commonwealth. He shall maintain programs
9 for the prevention of blindness and conservation of
10 sight.

11 *Section 13A.* The supervisor of the bureau of indi-
12 vidual services shall provide for the instruction of the
13 adult blind at their homes and may furnish materials
14 and tools to any blind person and may assist such blind
15 persons as are engaged in home industries in marketing
16 their products. He shall administer general services to
17 adult needy blind, including aid and relief and the dis-
18 tribution of equipment to ameliorate the handicap of

19 blindness, as provided in section twenty-three. He
20 shall plan aid to pre-school age blind children, assist
21 the parents of such children and co-operate with
22 private agencies having similar programs.

23 *Section 13B.* The supervisor of the bureau of re-
24 habilitation shall plan a co-operative program with
25 the Federal Security Agency for vocational rehabilita-
26 tion and guidance for the adult blind.

27 *Section 13C.* The supervisor of the bureau of indus-
28 trial aid and workshops shall administer aid to the
29 blind in finding employment for such persons. He shall
30 administer the schools and workshops.

31 *Section 13D.* The supervisor of the bureau of re-
32 search shall administer a research program for persons
33 whose eyesight is seriously defective and who are
34 likely to become visually handicapped or blind. He
35 may register such cases and take such other measures,
36 in co-operation with other authorities, including
37 medical, as he may deem advisable for the prevention
38 of blindness and the conservation of eyesight. He may
39 conduct surveys for the purpose of discovering new
40 work opportunities for blind persons.

1 SECTION 2. Said chapter 69 is further amended by
2 striking out section 14 and inserting in place thereof
3 the following section: —

4 *Section 14.* The director shall, with the approval
5 of the governor and council, establish, equip and main-
6 tain schools for the industrial training of blind persons
7 and workshops for their training and employment.
8 He may pay suitable wages to the employees of such
9 schools and workshops and may devise means for the
10 sale and distribution of the products of such schools
11 and workshops.

1 SECTION 3. Section 15 of said chapter 69, as ap-
2 pearing in the Tercentenary Edition, is hereby
3 amended by adding at the end the following sentence:
4 — He may receive in schools established by the divi-
5 sion pupils from other states upon the payment of
6 such fees as it may determine.

1 SECTION 4. Said chapter 69 is hereby further
2 amended by striking out sections 17 and 18 and insert-
3 ing in place thereof the following section: —

4 *Section 17.* The director shall be the executive and
5 administrative head of the division and shall adminis-
6 ter the laws relative to the blind except as may be
7 provided otherwise. He shall prepare and adopt rules
8 and regulations, with the approval of the advisory
9 board. All bills contracted by the division shall be
10 subject to his approval. He may act as the repre-
11 sentative of the blind in all proceedings before any
12 department, board or commission of the common-
13 wealth or of any county, city or town therein.

1 SECTION 5. Said chapter 69 is hereby further
2 amended by striking out section 19, as amended by
3 section 1 of chapter 89 of the acts of 1943, and inserting
4 in place thereof the following section: —

5 *Section 19.* The director of the blind shall maintain
6 a register of the blind in the commonwealth which
7 shall describe therein the condition, cause of blindness
8 and capacity for education and industrial training.
9 Said register shall be maintained on a current basis so
10 as to give information which will aid in planning im-
11 proved facilities and services to the blind and informa-
12 tion which will aid in planning improved facilities and
13 services to the blind and the restoration and conserva-

14 tion of sight. Boards of welfare of each city or town
15 shall furnish the director the names and addresses of
16 all known blind persons residing within such city or
17 town and said boards shall keep available such records
18 in each city or town. Said boards and the department
19 of public welfare shall report to the director whenever
20 aid is granted by such boards or department to families
21 in which there is a blind member and the director
22 shall report to said boards and department any blind
23 persons who, or whose families, are known to be re-
24 ceiving aid from the division.

1 SECTION 6. Sections 20, 21 and 22 of said chapter
2 69 of the General Laws are hereby repealed.

1 SECTION 7. Said chapter 69 is hereby further
2 amended by adding at the end the following two sec-
3 tions: —

4 INSTRUCTION OF VISUALLY HANDICAPPED AND BLIND
5 CHILDREN.

6 *Section 32.* The advisory board of education shall
7 appoint and may remove an assistant supervisor in
8 the division of elementary and secondary schools and
9 teachers' colleges to direct and supervise the education
10 of blind children and children whose eyesight is
11 seriously defective. Such board may expend annually
12 such sums as may be appropriated to provide sight
13 saving classes for children certified by a registered
14 ophthalmologist as fit subjects for instruction therein.
15 With the approval of the board, local school com-
16 mittees may organize and conduct such classes.

17 *Section 33.* The commissioner of education shall
18 conduct an annual survey with the co-operation of the

19 supervisor of special schools and classes and the di-
20 rector of the division of the blind, and with such other
21 assistance as he may deem necessary to determine the
22 number of blind children of school age and the grade
23 and residence of such children in the commonwealth.
24 If such survey establishes proof of the need of special
25 classes for the education of blind children the commis-
26 sioner is hereby authorized to recommend that, with
27 the approval of the board, local school committees
28 may organize and conduct such classes.

1 SECTION 8. Employees of the division of the blind
2 serving therein upon the effective date of this act who
3 are subject to the civil service laws shall continue to
4 serve in said division without impairment of their civil
5 service status, and such employees shall retain any
6 step increases from the minimum pay of their grade
7 earned during their service with said division, and for
8 retirement purposes their service with said division
9 shall be deemed to be creditable service.

