



PennState
Dickinson Law

DICKINSON LAW REVIEW
PUBLISHED SINCE 1897

Volume 50
Issue 3 *Dickinson Law Review* - Volume 50,
1945-1946

3-1-1946

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Recommended Citation

History of Legislative Action Relative to Aid the Blind in Pennsylvania, 50 DICK. L. REV. 88 (1946).
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HISTORY OF LEGISLATIVE ACTION RELATIVE TO AID TO THE BLIND IN PENNSYLVANIA¹

The Pennsylvania program of aid to the blind began in the legislative sessions of 1931 and 1933 which approved a resolution proposing an amendment to Article 111, Sec. 18 of the Constitution of Pennsylvania authorizing the appropriation of State funds for payment of blind pensions. This amendment was approved by the voters on November 7, 1933.

This section of the Constitution formerly read:

No appropriations, except for pensions or gratuities for military services, shall be made for charitable, educational or benevolent purposes, to any person or community, nor to any denominational or sectarian institution, corporation or association.

It was amended to read:

No appropriations except for pensions or gratuities for military services *and to blind persons twenty-one years of age and upwards*, shall be made for charitable, educational, or benevolent purposes, to any person or community, nor to any denominational or sectarian institution, corporation or association.²

1934 ACT

The Governor's call to the Extraordinary Session of the General Assembly which met November 13, 1933 included among the subjects for consideration by the Legislature:

"Legislation necessary to give effect to any Constitutional Amendments adopted by the people on November 7, 1933 - - - -"

On January 17, 1934, Governor Gifford Pinchot signed Pennsylvania's first Blind Pension Act.³ While this law was called a "blind pension" law, it was in reality a law to provide assistance to the needy blind.

The law provided a maximum monthly payment of \$30 to any needy blind person who

was 21 years of age and upwards;
had resided in the State continuously for at least ten years before applying for aid;

¹This material was prepared by Mrs. Mary T. Denman, County Secretary, Public Charities Association of Pennsylvania.

²By amendment dapped Nov 2, 1937, this section was again changed and now reads:
No appropriation shall be made for charitable, education, or benevolent purposes to any person or community nor to any denominational or sectarian institution, corporation, or association; *provided, that appropriations may be made for pensions or gratuities for military services and to blind persons twenty-one years of age and upwards, and for assistance to mothers having dependents children and to aged persons without adequate means of support.*

³1934 P. L. 246.

was not at the date of application an inmate of any prison, jail, workhouse, insane asylum, or other public reform or correctional institution;
 had not become a public charge through mental or physical infirmity;
 had insufficient means of his own to enable him to maintain himself, and was incapable of or lacking the opportunity of self-support;
 had less than 3/60 or 10/200 of normal vision and by reason thereof was unable to earn a livelihood except through special training and in occupations which can be successfully carried on by blind persons.

Administration was under the County Boards of Trustees of the Mothers' Assistance Fund, or in counties lacking such a Board, by Trustees of the Old Age Assistance Fund. If neither of these Boards existed in a county, the Governor was empowered to appoint a Board of Trustees of the Pension Fund for the Blind. The State Department of Welfare was responsible for supervision and had power to make Rules and Regulations for administration of the Act.

Although nothing was stated about responsibility of relatives in the section setting up eligibility requirements for assistance, Section 8 provided that before any payment could be made to any person under provisions of this act, a complete report must be made "of all matters stated in the application, giving the name of the beneficiary, the number and kinds of relatives, the financial condition of relatives, and all other matters which shall from time to time be required by the Department of Welfare."

Payments under this Act were made from June, 1934 to July, 1935. In June, 1934, 3,678 persons received aid under the provisions of this law. By June, 1935, this number had increased to 4,286.

THE 1935 ACT

During the legislative session of 1935, organized pressures developed for enactment of a Blind Pension program not based on need. The Senate passed a bill which proposed establishment of a Blind Pension program to be administered by the Department of Internal Affairs. This bill did not come to vote in the House, but a bill was enacted and signed by the Governor on July 9, 1935⁴ which changed both the provisions and the basic philosophy of the earlier law.

Residence requirements were reduced, visual acuity standards were liberalized, relatives' responsibility for support was eliminated, and the program was extended to include blind persons with incomes or property within certain limits. Specifically, this Act provided a monthly pension of \$30 to any blind person who

- was 21 years of age or over;
- had 3/60 or 10/200 or less normal vision;
- had resided in the State for at least five of the nine years immediately pre-

⁴1935 P. L. 621.

ceding his application for Blind Pension, and continuously for one year immediately preceding the application;
 was not at the date of application, an inmate of any prison, jail, insane asylum or other public reform or correctional institution;
 did not have real property with an assessed valuation of over \$5,000, and did not have an actual income of \$1,200 or more per year.

It was further provided that the combined pension and income should not exceed \$1,200 annually. No person could be denied a pension by reason of the fact that he was not a citizen of the United States. Administration was placed in the Department of Welfare and the County Boards of Trustees for the Mothers' Assistance Fund or in counties lacking such Boards by Trustees of the Old Age Assistance Fund or of Trustees of the Pension Fund for the Blind. The Act provided that any person whose claim for pension was denied should have opportunity for a fair hearing before the Department of Welfare.

The Blind Pension Act of 1935 was written to meet the demand of certain blind groups for a pension rather than assistance and at the same time it attempted to bring the provisions of the Pennsylvania law in line with the requirements of the Federal Social Security Act, then pending in Congress. The Social Security Act was passed August 14, 1935, and although it provides for federal reimbursement to States for financial assistance to needy blind persons⁵ the Pennsylvania Blind Pension plan, which was not based strictly on need, was approved, and the Social Security Board participated in the payment of blind pensions in Pennsylvania from February 1, 1936 to December 31, 1937. The Blind Pension Act of 1935 became effective July 1, 1935, but because of a lack of sufficient funds, the effect of the Act was not appreciably reflected in the case load until federal funds became available in February, 1936.⁶ In December, 1935, there were 4,448 persons receiving blind pensions. This number increased in February, 1936, to 6,872. The load in December, 1936, was 9,628 and by December, 1937 had increased to 11,016.

During this period of Federal participation, however, officials of the Social Security Board raised questions as to whether the Pennsylvania Blind Pension

⁵Public Law No. 271—1935 (74th Congress). Title X, Sec. 1001. "For the purpose of enabling each State to furnish financial assistance, as far as practicable under the conditions in such State, to needy individuals who are blind, . . ."

Sec. 1006. "When used in this title the term 'aid to the blind' means money payments to blind individuals."

Public Law No. 379—1939 (76th Congress) amends Title X, Sec. 1002 (a) by adding the requirement that a state plan to be approved for federal reimbursement must "provide that the state agency shall in determining need, take into consideration any other income and resources of an individual claiming aid to the blind." Amends Sec. 1006 to read that the term "aid to the blind" means money payments to blind individuals *who are needy*. (See Appendix, page 10).

⁶"The sharp rise during February and March, 1936, was due to the fact that a backlog of eligibles for blind pensions had accumulated during the period, prior to Federal participation, when funds were not sufficient to permit the addition of these eligibles to the rolls"—Penna. Public Asst. Statistics, February, 1939—p. 21—footnote.

payments were granted on the basis of need in accordance with the provisions of the Security Act. The Pennsylvania Public Assistance Review, First Quarter, 1943, p. 4, states:

Although Pennsylvania's Blind Pension program was not based strictly on needs, the Social Security Board agreed to participate in the payment of Blind Pensions, effective February 1, 1936, with the understanding that the question would be reconsidered at the next session of the State Legislature and an effort made to bring Pennsylvania's Blind program into conformity with the provisions of the Federal Social Security Act.

SPECIAL SESSION, 1936

The General Assembly was called to meet in Extraordinary Session May 4, 1936. The proclamation of the Governor for the session listed among the subjects to be considered, "Social Legislation to enable the Commonwealth, its political subdivisions, their agencies or instrumentalities and its citizens, to obtain full benefits of the Federal Social Security Act, including blind pensions amendment of existing laws to conform to the Federal requirements, and additional appropriations to enable the Commonwealth to match in full any Federal moneys available under the Social Security Act,".

An Act was passed, appropriating an additional \$200,000 as a supplement to the appropriation made in 1935 for blind pensions. The title of the act stated that its purpose was "to enable the Commonwealth to match sufficient funds from the Federal Government to provide pensions for all blind persons eligible to receive the same." No amendments were made to the 1935 act.

THE PUBLIC ASSISTANCE ACT OF 1937

In December, 1936, the Pennsylvania Committee on Public Assistance and Relief, (commonly called the Goodrich Committee), after a year's study of relief and assistance, made its report and recommendations for a unified public assistance program for Pennsylvania. The Committee recommended

That the basis of eligibility for all forms of assistance to be administered under the new County Boards of Assistance shall be as nearly alike as possible, namely, the actual need of assistance;

That the amount of the grant available to any eligible dependent person shall be the extent of this need, established in accordance with administrative regulations of the State Department of Assistance, allowing for fluctuations in living costs;⁷

The Public Assistance bill drafted by the Committee and introduced in the Senate on April 7, 1937 by Senators Thompson and McGinis⁸ provided for

⁷A Modern Public Assistance Program for Pennsylvania—*Report of the Pennsylvania Committee on Public Assistance and Relief*—p. 21.

⁸Senate Bill 883, 1937.

assistance to the blind on a needs basis in accordance with the provisions of the Social Security Act. This proposal was opposed by certain groups of the blind, and, in spite of a warning that the Social Security Board might discontinue participation in the payments if eligibility for the pension were not placed on a needs basis, the bill was amended before passage and the eligibility provisions of the Blind Pension Act of 1935 were written into the 1937 Public Assistance Law without change.⁹

Federal participation in the payments of blind pensions continued, however, until the end of 1937 in order that the new Department of Public Assistance might have time to determine how many of the blind pensioners would be eligible on a needs basis. Since there seemed to be no prospect of such a change in the Pennsylvania law, the Social Security Board withdrew its participation at the end of 1937.

SPECIAL SESSION, 1938

The discontinuance of Federal participation in the payments at the end of 1937 provided a strong incentive for action to amend the Pennsylvania law. The Governor's call for the Extraordinary Session which met July 25, 1938 included the following:

Amending or supplementing existing laws to obtain the full benefits of the Federal Social Security Act, with respect to blind persons.

On the first day of the session, Senator Kunkel introduced a bill¹⁰ which proposed amendment to the 1937 Public Assistance Act "by classifying blind persons entitled to receive assistance from those entitled to receive pensions." The bill set up two types of aid to the blind: (1) Blind Assistance, and (2) Blind Pensions. Sight tests and residence requirements in the 1937 Act were not changed for either program. The amount of the pension was not changed, but for blind assistance it was provided that aid would be given on a basis of need and in accordance with a schedule of grants set up by the Department of Public Assistance as in the case of other assistance programs. The purpose of this bill was to obtain Federal participation in the payments made to blind persons eligible for assistance. This proposal was not acceptable to certain pressure groups for the blind, since it would have required the blind to submit to investigation on a needs basis, and the bill failed to pass. It should be noted that the Social Security Board did not commit itself as to whether or not it would participate in assistance grants if the dual program proposed in the 1938 bill had been enacted.

CHANGES PROPOSED IN THE 1939 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

In the 1939 session another attempt was made to amend the Pennsylvania law to enable the State to qualify for some Federal reimbursement for aid to the

⁹1937 P. L. 2051.

¹⁰Senate Bill No. 6. Extraordinary Session, 1938.

needy blind, but at the same time to satisfy those groups which demand a pension program. The Van Allsburg Bill¹¹ proposed a number of changes to the Public Assistance Act. Among these was a proposal to separate the Assistance program into two parts: (1) Special Assistance, which was defined as assistance provided from or with State or Federal Funds for dependent children, aged persons or blind persons, and (2) General Assistance and Pensions, which was defined as assistance provided from or with State funds only to persons entitled under this Act to assistance other than dependent children, aged persons, and blind persons, and including pensions for the blind.

The bill continued the existing pensions program by providing, under "General Assistance and Pensions" that:

all blind persons who are not receiving blind assistance and whose annual income is less than \$1,200 or who have property the assessed valuation of which, less recorded incumbrances, is \$5,000 or less, shall be entitled to blind pensions. The pension of a blind person shall be \$30 per month, except where a blind person has an income of less than \$1,200 per year the pension shall be fixed in such amount so that the combined income and pension shall not exceed \$1,200.

It provided for blind assistance in addition to blind pensions by including under "Special Assistance" a provision that

all blind persons who are not receiving blind pensions shall be entitled to blind assistance for the purpose of conforming with the provisions of the Federal Social Security Act.

and further provided that

The needy blind recipients of special assistance shall receive from general assistance the difference between the amount received as special assistance and the sum of \$30 so that every needy blind person shall receive total assistance in the amount of \$30. No payment made under general assistance to any needy blind person shall be deemed to be an item of income so as to disqualify such needy blind person to receive funds under the special assistance provisions of this Act.

In a letter to the sponsor of this bill, in which the various proposals included in the bill were discussed, Howard L. Russell, then Secretary of Public Assistance stated:

The change recommended for the administration of Blind Pensions is not on a basis to insure participation by the Social Security Board in this program.

A memorandum issued by the PCA on May 9, 1939, analyzing the provisions of the bill, contains the following statement about the proposals for assistance to the blind:

¹¹House Bill 867, 1939.

Blind Assistance and Pensions.

The Act, in an apparent attempt to secure funds from the Federal Social Security Board for Blind Assistance, sets up a complicated scheme which would in our estimation fail to meet the requirements of the Social Security Board.

It provides that the blind person would first apply to the Special Assistance Department, where eligibility would be determined on the basis of need. In case, however, the grant so determined is less than \$30 per month, it will be supplemented up to this amount in the form of a pension from the General Assistance Department. The legislation further provides that the Department of Special Assistance cannot count the amount received as a pension from the Department of General Assistance as income in determining the amount of Special Assistance.

It is the opinion of those who have worked closely with the Social Security Board and are familiar with their rules and regulations that the change in the law contained in the Van Allsburg Act is not on a basis to insure participation by the Social Security Board in this program.

Many amendments were made to this bill in the course of its passage through the legislature. As finally enacted, it made no change in the program for blind pensions as set up in the Public Assistance Act of 1937.

No further attempt to provide for assistance to the needy blind other than the pension program was made until the 1945 session of the legislature, although the PCA and many other groups were concerned about the inadequacy of the \$30 pension for those blind persons who had no other income.

1945 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Several bills affecting Blind Pensions were introduced in the 1945 Session of the Legislature. House Bills 705 and 1042 and Senate Bill 312 proposed to amend the Public Assistance Act to increase the Blind Pension from \$30 to \$40 per month. House Bill 1042 also provided that the definition of blindness in the Public Assistance Act should be changed to include "gun barrel vision." Senate Bill 585 proposed a program of aid to the needy blind instead of the present pension program. Of these, only Senate Bill 312 was passed.

On February 27, 1945, at the request of the Pennsylvania Association for the Blind and of the Pennsylvania Federation for the Blind, Mr. Gayle Burlingame, then Chief of the State Council for the Blind, called a meeting in Harrisburg of representatives of agencies for the blind. Representatives of organizations for the blind who were present endorsed several resolutions, including the following:

- (1) Urging that the "ceilings and restrictions as to holdings and income should be stricken from the Blind Pension Law."

- (2) Approving passage of Senate Bill 312 increasing the pension grant from \$30 to \$40 per month.
- (3) Proposing to amend the present definition of blindness to include persons with gun-barrel vision—"a limitation in the field of vision such that the widest diameter of the visual field subtends at an angle no greater than 10 degrees."

During the Session the question was again raised with the Social Security Board whether approval would be given to a dual program for the blind in Pennsylvania: assistance for the needy blind and pensions for those who would not qualify for assistance on a needs basis. No satisfactory answer was received, and on March 26, 1945, Senator Homsher introduced Senate Bill 585 proposing an amendment to the 1937 Public Assistance Act to provide for Aid to the Blind in lieu of Blind Pensions.

Senate Bill 585 proposed the following changes:

- (1) Made all blind persons eligible, regardless of age.
(Applicant for blind pensions under present program must be 21 years of age or over).
- (2) Reduced residence requirement to one year, instead of five years out of the last nine, as required under present law.
- (3) Extended eligibility to include persons with visual acuity of 20/200 or less, (instead of 10/200) and also including limited field of vision up to an angular distance of 20 degrees.
- (4) Provided that the sum of the assistance grant and net income shall not be less than \$40 for a blind person living alone, or less than \$65 for two or more blind persons living together.
- (5) Eliminated the present pension provisions.

The Department estimated that the cost of an Aid to the Blind Program as proposed in Senate Bill 585 would be \$16,000,000 a biennium, of which 50% would be reimbursed from Federal funds. The cost of a pension program with a \$40 a month pension was estimated as approximately \$12,000,000 a biennium all of which would be paid from state funds.

Strong opposition to Senate Bill 585 came from certain organized blind groups. The attitude of these groups is expressed in the following quotation from a statement issued against the bill by the Pennsylvania Federation for the Blind:

The Homsher Bill definitely and entirely abolishes the humane blind pension system of Pennsylvania and places the blind on direct paupers' relief. If enacted, thousands of blind of this State will immediately be deprived of any assistance whatsoever. Others will receive a

minimum dole. It allows the Department of Public Assistance to place judgments on the property of the blind, no matter how small, who receive paupers' relief.

No organized support for the bill developed, and it died in the Senate Welfare Committee.

Senate Bill 312 amending the 1937 Public Assistance Act to increase Blind Pensions from \$30 to \$40 was passed. This increase became effective September 1, 1945. In a statement issued March 26, 1945, the Secretary of Public Assistance said:

Since a pension program does not come within the scope of the Social Security Act, Pennsylvania has had to bear the entire cost of the Blind Pension Program, which is currently costing about \$9,000,000 during a biennium. If the pension is increased by \$10 as proposed, the cost to the Commonwealth will be increased by \$3,000,000.

It should be noted that the definition of blindness in the Pennsylvania law is much more limited than that found in most state plans. Pensions are granted in Pennsylvania only to persons who have 3/60 or 10/200 or less normal vision. More than thirty states with programs of aid to the blind which are federally approved and reimbursed provide such aid to persons having 20/200 or less visual acuity, and a number of states include in the definition of blindness a disqualifying defect in the visual field.

The 1945 legislative session leaves the State with the Blind Pension Program established by the 1935 Session, except that the amount of the pension has been increased from \$30 to \$40 a month.

APPENDIX—A

PROVISIONS OF THE FEDERAL SOCIAL SECURITY ACT¹
WITH REFERENCE TO AID TO THE BLIND

Title X of the Federal Social Security Act of 1935 as amended in 1939, authorizes federal appropriations "for the purpose of enabling each State to furnish financial assistance, to needy individuals who are blind." Federal funds made available under this section of the Act are to be used for making payments to States which have submitted and had approved by the Social Security Board, State plans for aid to the blind.

A State plan for aid to the blind must

- (1) provide that it shall be in effect in all political subdivisions of the State;
- (2) provide for financial participation by the State;
- (3) provide either administration by a single State agency or supervision of administration by a single State agency;
- (4) provide for granting to any individual whose claim is denied an opportunity for a fair hearing before such State agency;
- (5) provide such methods of administration (including after January 1, 1940, methods relating to the establishment and maintenance of personnel standards on a merit basis, except that the Social Security Board shall exercise no authority with respect to the selection, tenure of office, and compensation of any individual employed in accordance with such methods) as are found by the Board to be necessary, for the proper and efficient operation of the plan;
- (6) provide that the State agency will make such reports, in such form and containing such information, as the Social Security Board may from time to time require, and comply with such provisions as the Board may from time to time find necessary to assure the correctness and verification of such reports;
- (7) provide that no aid will be furnished any individual under the plan with respect to any period with respect to which he is receiving old age assistance under the State plan approved under the Old Age Assistance Title of the Security Act;
- (8) provide that the State agency shall, in determining need, take into consideration the resources of an individual claiming aid to the blind;

¹Public Law No. 271—74th Congress (1935) as amended by Public Law No. 379—76th Congress (1939).

- (9) provide safeguards which restrict the use or disclosure of information concerning applicants and recipients to purposes directly connected with the administration of aid to the blind.

The Act, as amended, provides for payment from federal funds to States with approved plans for aid to the blind, amounts equal to one-half the total sums spent as aid to the blind under State plans "to each needy individual who is blind and is not an inmate of a public institution," not counting any amount over \$40 per month. The Act provides also for payment from federal funds of one-half of costs of administration of the State plan.

By amendment of 1939, the term "aid to the blind" is defined as money payments to blind individuals who are needy.

APPENDIX—B

OTHER STATE PROGRAMS OF AID OR PENSIONS FOR THE BLIND

Of the 48 States, 45 have programs of Aid to the Blind and receive federal reimbursement. Pennsylvania, Missouri and Nevada have programs which do not qualify for federal reimbursement.

California

California has two public assistance programs for the blind: Aid to the Needy Blind which is reimbursed from federal funds and Aid to the Partially Self-Supporting Blind Residents which is paid entirely from State funds. These programs are set up in two separate laws.

Both of these statutes define a blind person as any person who by reason of loss or impairment of eyesight is unable to provide himself with the necessities of life and who has not sufficient income of his own to maintain himself.

No period of State residence is required of those losing their sight in California, but for those who lost their sight elsewhere, a period of one year immediately preceding application and at least five out of the last nine years residence in California is required for Aid to the Needy Blind, while ten years of continuous State residence immediately preceding the application for Aid to the Partially Self-Supporting Blind is required.

Each law names the spouse, parent and adult child as responsible relatives liable for support, and authorizes (but does not require) recovery action against such relatives if pecuniarily able to contribute to the support of the recipient. The granting of aid, however, is not contingent upon the taking of such recovery action or of recovery.

Both statutes permit the possession of personal and real property of an assessed valuation, less recorded encumbrances, of \$3,000.

The grant of aid in both Aid to the Needy Blind and Aid to Partially Self-Supporting Blind Residents laws is fixed as that amount which, when added to the income of the applicant from all other sources, equals \$50 per month. However, under the Aid to the Needy Blind Act, casual income and inconsequential resources are exempted from consideration in determining the grant, and provision is also made under this Act, that other income of the individual may be applied toward meeting his total needs, if such needs are in excess of the maximum grant of \$50 a month.¹

The Aid to the Partially Self-Supporting Blind Residents statute exempts from all consideration in determining the amount of the grant, income of a com-

¹This is similar to the principle now being used in Pennsylvania in calculating grants for OAA, ADC, and GA.

bined total value not exceeding \$400 a year from certain sources including labor or services, gifts (other than those from responsible relatives), and the net income from real and personal property.

To be eligible for aid under either law, a blind person must be at least 16 years of age and must not be an inmate of any institution supported in whole or in part by the State or any of its political subdivisions, neither may he be solicit alms. An applicant for Aid to the Partially Self-Supporting Blind Residents, in addition to meeting the other eligibility requirements, must possess a reasonably adequate plan for self-support, and must give some assurance of having put forth a sincere and sustained effort in attempting to effectuate the plan.

Missouri

Missouri, like Pennsylvania, has a pension program. Every adult blind person of good moral character, twenty-one years of age or over, who has resided for ten consecutive years or more in the State before making application or who has lost his sight while a resident of the State and has been a continuous resident of the State since such loss of sight, is entitled to a blind pension of \$300 a year, payable quarterly; provided that no person is entitled to a pension who has an annual income of \$900 or more per year or who owns property or an interest in property to the value of \$5,000 or more, or who lives with a sighted husband or wife who has an income of \$900 a year or more or who has property valued at \$5,000 or more, or who has parents, resident in Missouri, able to provide for his reasonable support. Blind persons who are maintained in public, private or endowed institutions or by private persons are ineligible for pensions, and no person is entitled to a pension while confined in a jail or penitentiary under conviction of any offense or while publicly soliciting alms in any manner or through any artifice in any part of the State, or while confined in any insane asylum at public expense. Blind pensions in Missouri are administered through the Missouri Commission for the Blind and not as part of the public assistance program. Applications for pensions are made to the judge of the local probate court.

In August, 1945, the Social Security Board reported approximately 3,000 persons receiving blind pensions in Missouri.

Nevada

Nevada has a state law authorizing county relief to any blind person unable to provide himself with the necessities of life. The grant from the counties may not exceed \$600 per year. The State makes a biennial appropriation for the purpose of supplementing the county grant. A flat monthly grant of \$20 from state funds is authorized to every blind person found eligible for county relief to the blind. Twenty-eight persons were receiving blind pensions in Nevada in August, 1945.

APPENDIX—C

TABLES RELATING TO CASE LOADS AND COSTS
IN PENNSYLVANIA AND OTHER STATES

TABLE I

AVERAGE NUMBER OF CASES RECEIVING BLIND PENSIONS
IN PENNSYLVANIA—1934-1945

<i>Years</i>	<i>Months</i>	
	<i>June</i>	<i>December</i>
1934	3,679 (a)	4,203
1935	4,286	4,448
1936	8,405 (b)	9,628
1937	10,461	11,016 (c)
1938	11,626	12,028
1939	12,262	12,689
1940	12,962	13,463
1941	13,656	13,954 (d)
1942	13,931	13,857
1943	13,437	13,281
1944	12,956	12,920
1945	12,700	12,882 (e)

-
- (a) 1934 Act providing Aid to the Needy Blind became effective June 1, 1934.
- (b) 1935 Act providing Blind Pensions became effective July 1, 1935 but funds were insufficient to care for all eligibles. Federal funds for the blind became available for Pennsylvania February 1, 1936. In February, the case load increased to 6,872.
- (c) Federal funds were withdrawn December 31, 1937 since the Pennsylvania pension program did not conform to the federal requirements that aid be given on a basis of need.
- (d) Case load for blind pensions was highest in November and December, 1941; average for November was 13,955.
- (e) Average number of cases receiving Blind Pensions in November, 1945.

TABLE II
 AVERAGE MONTHLY EXPENDITURES FOR BLIND PENSIONS
 IN PENNSYLVANIA—1934-1945

<i>Years</i>	<i>Average Monthly Expenditures</i>	<i>Average Monthly Payments Per Person</i>
1934 ^a	\$ 94,235	\$23.24
1935	114,984	26.72
1936	245,567	29.87
1937	312,413	29.92
1938	348,206	29.92
1939	369,311	29.92
1940	389,294	29.95
1941	408,894	29.88
1942	415,321	29.86
1943	401,389	
1944	386,849	
1945 (June	378,318	
(Sept.	504,762	39.63 ^b
(Oct.	508,677	

^aDuring the years 1934 and 1935 the program for the blind was administered on the basis of need, with a maximum monthly grant of \$30, under the provisions of the 1934 Act.

In 1936, following the change over to the pension basis, the average payment jumped to \$29.87, where with only minor fluctuations, it remained until September, 1945, when the Amendment of 1945, increasing the maximum monthly pension to \$40, went into effect.

^bAverage monthly payments, August, 1945—Checks dated September 1, 1945 are included.

TABLE III
BLIND PERSONS RECEIVING AID AND AMOUNTS OF
GRANT, IN CERTAIN STATES¹
AUGUST, 1945

<i>State</i>	<i>of Recipient</i>		<i>Grant</i>
	<i>Average Number</i>	<i>Total</i>	
Pennsylvania	12,740	\$504,848 ²	\$39.63 ²
California	5,351	255,945	47.83
Illinois	5,118	174,633	34.12
Massachusetts	962	43,065	44.77
New York	2,928	116,501	39.79
Ohio	3,002	81,938	27.29

¹The States shown in Table III, with the exception of Pennsylvania, have a program of Assistance to Needy Blind, and receive federal reimbursement.

²Checks dated September 1, 1945 are included. Amendment increasing maximum monthly pension to \$40 became effective September 1, 1945.