

6-10-1886

Report : Petition of H. Harrell

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IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES.

JUNE 10, 1886.—Ordered to be printed.

Mr. BLAIR, from the Committee on Pensions, submitted the following

REPORT:

[To accompany bill S. 1838.]

The Committee on Pensions, to whom was referred the bill (S. 1838) to increase the pension of George R. Hooper, have examined the same and report:

The claimant is George R. Hooper, late a private of Company K, Twelfth Massachusetts Volunteers. The facts upon which this increase is based are stated in the following letter of George A. Mead, auditor's office, custom-house, Boston, Mass., and appended medical certificate:

CUSTOM-HOUSE, BOSTON, MASS.,
Collector's Office, January 28, 1886.

MY DEAR SIR: In as brief a letter as the facts will admit, I desire to ask your opinion and enlist your service in behalf of a wounded soldier who deserves well of his country for the suffering that he has borne patiently and without a murmur. The soldier's name is George R. Hooper, residing at No. 8 Bolton street, Somerville, Mass. He was a private in Company K, Twelfth Regiment Massachusetts Volunteers; lost his arm at the battle of Fredericksburg, on the 12th of December, 1862; drew a pension of \$24 per month until October, 1884, when an increase was asked for by reason of total disability, no amount being specified, but he was allowed \$50 per month; this amount he has drawn since October 1, 1884.

Mr. Hooper was taken ill with spinal disease on the 1st day of November, 1883; laid on a canvas appliance, to which he was strapped, in bed, thirteen months, when he was allowed to be strapped in a chair specially made for such cases; he is hoisted in and out of bed by means of rope and tackle suspended from a 4-inch joist, running diagonally across the room. He is completely paralyzed below his waist; is insensible to the calls of nature, and those acts are performed without his knowledge. Physically, he is as helpless as one can be and live; he requires the constant attention of his wife as a nurse, and if ever a man was entitled to be benefited by the United States pension act, he is.

All these facts are fully set forth in his application for increase, supported by the affidavits, under oath of two physicians, one a professor in a college on such diseases, the other his family physician for some time; the first a graduate from Dartmouth, the other from Harvard. His pension certificate number is 12111, dated January 23, 1885. He may live a year; he may live five years; he has a family to support; he is under expense all the time to his physician; he has always been a good, industrious, moral, and temperate man.

The physicians above referred to have sworn under oath that the disease he is now suffering from was caused by the amputation of his arm; he has been examined by one of the department's medical examiners; his situation has been testified to by letters from prominent and worthy people; by the commander of the "G. A. R." post of his town, &c., all of which are filed with the last application which he made to the Pension Bureau.

I, as well as a number of his friends, honestly and candidly believe this man is entitled to receive a pension of \$72 per month for total disability, as that is his condition now, and has been for two years.

I have the honor to be your very obedient servant,

GEO. A. MEAD,

Auditor's Office, Custom-House, Boston, Mass.

Hon. GEORGE F. HOAR,
United States Senator for Massachusetts.

SOMERVILLE, MASS., *April 24, 1886.*

DEAR SIR: Mr. George R. Hooper, Company K, Twelfth Massachusetts Regiment, came under my care some time during the summer of 1883, complaining of unsteadiness in his gait, accompanied with a feeling of insecurity in stepping over objects, going up stairs, tripping and stumbling easily, finally falling down in the street, and unable to stand.

For this condition Mr. Hooper consulted Dr. James J. Putnam, of Boston, Mass., who advised Mr. Hooper to be confined to his bed with an apparatus applied to back and spine. This treatment, with the usual remedies, was without avail. His condition grew more helpless until the present time; he now is a confirmed invalid. Mr. Hooper lies in bed on his back unable to move himself in any manner, except his head and left arm (his right arm he lost December 12, 1862, at the battle of Fredericksburg). He is moved by the aid of ropes and pulleys arranged above his bed. In this manner he can be taken from bed, placed in a rolling chair or on a lounge, while his bed is being made or changed. He has no power to move his legs. He cannot even turn in bed without the aid of a nurse or attendant. He has no control of the functions of the bladder or of the bowels; he has to be under the constant supervision and care of his nurse; every want or need has to be met by his attendants. He has no pain or suffering, but he is perfectly helpless. His disease, causation, prognosis, and treatment will be stated by his attending physician.

I have no interest in the above statement.

WILLIAM W. DOW, M. D.,
Harvard, 1869.

Hon. GEO. F. HOAR,
United States Senator.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, PENSION OFFICE,
Washington, D. C., March 8, 1886.

SIR: In response to the request of Hon. George F. Hoar, relative to the claim of George R. Hooper, certificate No. 12,111, I have the honor to inform you that there is no provision of law under which pension at a higher rate than \$50 per month can be allowed. The pension was allowed at the above-mentioned rate from October 8, 1884, for amputation of right arm, and resulting in paralysis of lower extremities, it being shown that he required the regular aid and attendance of another person, but the disability not being one of those specified by the statutes as entitling to \$72 per month, he was allowed the highest rate possible. Had he been on the rolls at \$50 per month on June 16, 1880, the office would be authorized to grant his request, but, as the case now stands, relief must be sought by special legislation. Attention is invited to section 4698 of the Revised Statutes, the act of June 18, 1874; the act of June 17, 1878; and the act of June 16, 1880.

Very respectfully,

JOHN C. BLACK,
Commissioner.

GEO. A. MEAD, Esq.,
Auditor's Office, Custom-House, Boston, Mass.

After a consideration of all the facts in this case your committee recommend the passage of the bill.