

SAFETY STANDARDS IN EMPLOYMENT

FRIDAY, APRIL 28, 1967

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE NUMBER 5 OF THE
COMMITTEE ON THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA,
Washington, D.C.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:05 o'clock a.m., in room 1310, Longworth House Office Building, Honorable B. F. Sisk (Chairman of the Subcommittee) presiding.

Present: Representatives Sisk (presiding), Dowdy, Jacobs, and Gude.

Also present: James T. Clark, clerk; Hayden S. Garber, counsel; Sara Watson, assistant counsel; Leonard O. Hilder, investigator; and Donald Tubridy, minority clerk.

Mr. SISK. Subcommittee No. 5 will come to order.

The business pending before the subcommittee this morning is H.R. 1264, which would amend Title II of the District of Columbia minimum wage law relating to industrial safety.

The original legislation was enacted in 1941 and it appears to have functioned reasonably well under the direction of an Industrial Safety Board until 1964. In that year, the Corporation Counsel rendered an opinion which sharply restricted the application of the existing law and confined its provisions to the regulation of safety conditions in manufacturing plants and building construction. In effect, this means that, according to my figures, only approximately 16 percent of the employed persons in the District of Columbia are covered by present law as so interpreted. For example, hotel and restaurant workers, retail workers, legal, medical, and other office workers, to the number of more than 100,000 would be excluded from coverage and protection under the present law as interpreted by the 1964 decision.

H.R. 1264 would amend the Code by eliminating "industrial employment" and would make adequate safety regulations applicable to all phases of employment. It would also modify the penalties for violation to provide a smaller minimum and a larger maximum fine, thus, in my opinion, enhancing enforcement and authorizing penalties in keeping with the severity of the violation.

I do not believe this proposed legislation is necessarily controversial; however, during these hearings I am sure there may be questions raised, and doubtless it will be desired to consider possible amendments and possibly to adopt such amendments.

We will start off by putting a copy of H.R. 1264 in the record at this point, together with staff memoranda.