

AMENDING THE RAILROAD RETIREMENT ACT OF 1937 AND THE RAILROAD UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE ACT

TUESDAY, JANUARY 16, 1968

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON INTERSTATE AND FOREIGN COMMERCE,
Washington, D.C.

The committee met at 10 a.m., pursuant to notice, in room 2123, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Harley O. Staggers (chairman) presiding.

The CHAIRMAN. The committee will please be in order.

The hearings today are on H.R. 14563, an agreed-on bill which I introduced on the closing day of the last session.

The purpose of this bill is to provide an increase in benefits for all persons covered by the Railroad Retirement Act who have not received increases in benefits under either the Railroad Retirement Act or the Social Security Act as a result of last year's social security bill. In general, the increases will amount to 110 percent of the increases in benefits which the individual concerned would have received under the Social Security Act had he been a social security beneficiary rather than a railroad retirement beneficiary, subject to certain offsets. The increases take effect at the same time the social security increases take effect. Many persons automatically receive increases in railroad retirement benefits when social security benefits increase, because their benefits are computed under the social security formula, which was increased by last years amendments. These individuals are not affected by the bill. All other beneficiaries will receive increases of \$10 or more, in the case of retired employees, or \$5 or more in the case of wives, widows, parents, and children (before any reductions for early payment of benefits).

The bill also liberalizes the earnings test for employees receiving railroad retirement benefits as a result of disability, provides benefits for disabled widows and widowers, and liberalizes some of the eligibility tests under the Railroad Retirement Act for payment of benefits to family survivors.

The bill also amends the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act to provide increases in daily rates of benefits for unemployment and for sickness, and makes further revisions in that program.

The bill was drafted to carry out an agreement made between representatives of the carriers and representatives of the brotherhoods. The benefits provided by the bill will not require any further increases in railroad retirement taxes over those currently scheduled in the law.