

Congress in trying to solve some very difficult problems. This change of attitude has been so helpful that I hope you can get it across to your members that we are very, very appreciative.

Mr. MILLER. Thank you.

Mr. LEONARD. Mr. Chairman, that statement will be in the record and I assure you several copies of the record will be made available to our members. It is something we have been working for for many, many years and I know we all appreciate it.

Mr. DORN. I am sorry our time has run out. I understand the other witnesses scheduled for today have agreed to submit a statement to the committee. I regret the time has run out but I want you to know you are all welcome before the committee.

Is Mr. Irvin P. Schloss, the National President of the Blinded Veterans Association, present?

Mr. SCHLOSS. Yes, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. DORN. We will be glad for you to make any brief comment you may have.

STATEMENT OF IRVIN P. SCHLOSS, NATIONAL PRESIDENT, BLINDED VETERANS ASSOCIATION

Mr. SCHLOSS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee.

I appreciate this opportunity to appear before you to state the legislative objectives of the Blinded Veterans Association for the first session of the 91st Congress.

As you know, the Blinded Veterans Association was founded in March 1945 as a membership organization of veterans blinded as a result of their service in the Armed Forces of the United States. The BVA was incorporated in New York in 1947 and chartered by act of Congress in 1958. Our membership consists of veterans of World War I, World War II, the Korean conflict, and the war in Vietnam.

The Blinded Veterans Association has been pleased with the development of programs and benefits designed to assist blinded veterans to become fully rehabilitated and restored to the working force of the Nation. As a result of representations to the Veterans' Administration and to the Congress various programs such as the training centers for blinded veterans at the Veterans' Administration Hospitals at Hines, Ill., and Palo Alto, Calif., were established and have served as models for similar programs designed to aid civilian blind persons in adjusting to the basic handicaps imposed by blindness. This committee and the Congress as a whole have periodically reviewed the veterans benefit structure and have made adjustments from time to time to meet changing needs. However, certain shortcomings in the benefits structure continue to exist; and we earnestly hope that the 91st Congress will deal with them.

The Blinded Veterans Association would like to recommend action by the committee in several areas of concern to the Nation's blinded veterans and those permanently and totally disabled from other causes. We have three recommendations to which we have assigned a priority: (1) improvement in benefits for the survivors of veterans permanently and totally disabled from service-connected causes; (2) realistic increases in dependency allowances for veterans with service-connected