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This Week In Congress Radio Address: Commemorative Stamp Honoring Emily Bissel, 1953
March 25
Speaker: Senator J. Allen Frear
Transcribed by: David Cardillo

[00:00]
Announcer: The Week in Congress, recorded on March 18th, 1953, and played on WDOV on March 25th, 1953.

Mr. Kelly: From Washington, DC, transcribed, United States Senator J. Allen Frear brings to the people of Delaware the twelfth in a series of brief, weekly reports on current congressional affairs. Ladies and gentlemen, Senator Frear.

Senator Frear: Thank you. Many Delawareans will remember that since 1949, I have attempted, through the process of Federal legislation, to obtain issuance of a commemorative postage stamp honoring the memory of one of Delaware’s most notable women: Emily P. Bissell. As most of you know, Miss Bissell is the lady who founded and promoted the sale of the famed Christmas seal. I am sure that this seal, which dramatically symbolizes the fight against tuberculosis, has, through its sale and use by millions of Americans, helped, perhaps more than any other single method, to reduce the ravages of this dread disease. It is fitting, therefore, that not only our state, but the whole nation, should encourage for Miss Bissell a form of recognition which her untiring efforts in behalf of humanity richly deserve. The failure of congress to act favorably on legislation authorizing the Bissell stamp is in no sense a reflection on the outstanding achievements of this distinguished Delaware lady. Rather, the lack of congressional action has stemmed from the inability of congressional committees to find time enough for appropriate consideration of the many, many bills offered for commemorative stamps of all types. Recently, the Senate Post Office and Civil Service Committee indicated that it would refer all requests for such stamps to the Post Office Department, where future issues will be determined administratively by the Postmaster General. The department, naturally, prefers this method of handling stamp requests because it is thoroughly familiar with postal affairs. Therefore, I am now initiating direct negotiations with Postmaster General Summerfield in the hope that his department will see fit to approve the stamp honoring Emily Bissell within the next year. In the past, the Post Office Department has issued several commemorative stamps to honor former American women. For example, a special stamp was issued in tribute to Susan B. Anthony in connection with the sixteenth anniversary
of the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment granting suffrage to women. Another stamp was issued to commemorate one hundred years of progress of American women. A special stamp was also authorized in honor of Juliet Gordon Low, former and organizer of girl scouting in the United States. And a special stamp was issued to honor Manonah Michael (phonetic [03:44]), founder of the Memorial Poppy. It seems to me, in these days of international tension and strife, when our nation and others like us must, of necessity, devote much of our time, energies, and resources to the development of implements of war and destruction that a suggestion for awarding recognition to a person whose life was spent in the cause of helping her fellow citizens and lessening their suffering is a marked and refreshing contrast. I shall welcome the expressions of any and all interested Delawareans in behalf of a commemorative stamp for Emily Bissell. It is needless to point out the pride which all of Delaware shares in this great lady. And I shall hope that this pride can be translated into a tangible tribute to Miss Bissell by the government of the United States.

Mr. Kelly: Thank you, Senator Frear. From the nation’s capital, you have heard United States Senator J. Allen Frear in the twelfth of a series of brief reports to the people of Delaware on current congressional affairs. Senator Frear spoke from the Senate Office Building in Washington and will be heard again next week at this same time.

[End 05:14]