The week in Congress, recorded on April 15th, 1954, and played on WDOV on April 21st, 1954.

From Washington, DC, transcribed, United States Senator J. Allen Frear reports again to the people of Delaware on current congressional affairs. Ladies and gentlemen, Senator Frear.

Thank you. A full-scale investigation is about to take place into the operation of the Federal government’s housing program. It appears that the inquiry will be carried out not only by one or more committees of Congress, but also by leading officials of the housing and home finance agency, which oversees all Federal housing activities. In Congress, the Senate Banking and Currency Committee has virtually exclusive jurisdiction over housing legislation, and therefore, it can be anticipated that this committee will play a substantial role in forthcoming events. Those of us who are interested in the Federal government’s housing program are hopeful that this investigation will not affect the usefulness of the Housing Agency nor diminish their service to the people of the United States. But at the same time, speaking as one member of the Banking and Currency Committee, I trust that no stone will be left unturned in the matter of clearing up any irregularities which are found to exist, and in making certain that future operations of the Housing Agency are carried on, both in the spirit as well as in the letter of the law. It is too early yet to comment on specific matters that will probably arise during the course of this investigation. Personalities and activities involved, especially in the Federal Housing Administration, which is one of the housing agencies, will almost certainly come under careful scrutiny. The Senate Banking and Currency Committee has already met and outlined preliminary arrangements for its work. A resolution has been introduced in the Senate to authorize funds for the procurement of a staff of competent personnel to carry out the inquiry. It is to be expected that the housing administrator, Mr. Albert Cole, who supervises all of the nation’s federal housing programs, will coordinate the inquiry, which he has launched, with the congressional investigation. Now, I know that many of us are investigation-conscious. In recent years, there have been inquiries made into many different activities. Some of these investigations have proved very productive. Others have been not so successful. In our investigation of the housing situation, it is to be hoped that the whole procedure will be
carried out with the calmness and good judgment which depict the dignity of the Congress of the United States. Thousands and thousands of American homeowners have purchased their homes through FHA loans. Additional thousands, perhaps millions, have improved their properties with FHA modernization loans. Tremendous building projects, such as large apartment units, have been constructed under provisions of our housing laws. As we proceed into this matter, I trust that the session of the investigating committee will be kept open to the public as much as possible so that every interested person will have an opportunity to see and judge the facts at first hand. In that way, we will have a better chance, perhaps, of arriving at the kind of conclusions which will be most beneficial to the future of our Federal Housing Program. The start of this inquiry will delay, somewhat, Senate action on the pending housing bill, in which there is still unsettled the question of whether or not we shall have any more public housing. I hope, however, that the housing investigation will not supersede action on our new housing legislation for too long a period. Although much attention is centering on this new inquiry, which I’ve just talked about, our Senate Finance Committee is continuing its work on the new tax revision bill. It is difficult to predict when committee consideration of this complex and lengthy piece of legislation will be completed. But I continue to welcome the large number of letters and other communications from the citizens of Delaware who are concerned with the various provisions of this bill. [05:01]

Mr. Kelly: Thank you, Senator Frear. From the nation’s capital, you have heard United States Senator J. Allen Frear in his regular report to the people of Delaware on current congressional affairs. Senator Frear will be heard again next week at this same time.

[End 05:25]