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Announcer: The Week in Congress, recorded on February 6th, 1956.

Mr. Kelly: 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.

Senator Frear: Thank you, Mr. Kelly. The Senate Finance Committee, throughout this month of February, will be concerning itself to a considerable degree on a legislative matter of most far-reaching application and interest. The issue in question is H.R. 7225, which embodies the Social Security Amendment of 1955. This bill, passed by the House of Representatives during the first session of Congress, is following the customary procedure of most other legislation in that it now comes before the Senate for examination and debate. Since tax provisions are a part of the bill, H.R. 7225 was initially referred to the Ways and Means Committee of the House, and currently to the Finance Committee of the Senate which, as you know, passes on all tax legislation on the Senate side of Capitol Hill. I am sure that most Delawareans are familiar with the Social Security law since it applies to a major portion of the men and women of every state in the union. Some indication of the interest in the pending issue may be found in the fact that public hearings alone are expected to consume much of the remaining days of this month and, following the open hearings, the Finance Committee will, in the executive session, undertake to prepare the legislation’s final form for submission to the full membership of the Senate. H.R. 7225, as passed by the House, proposes a number of changes in the existing social security law. Among them is one which would bring under the law all professional groups now excluded except physicians. As you know, the present statute excludes specific professional groups, that is, physicians, lawyers, dentists, osteopaths, veterinarians, chiropractors, and optometrists. A great deal of controversy exists over the question of whether individuals in these various professions should be included under the social security law. From the mail which I have received so far, both from Delaware and from other states, it would appear that opinion is quite divided. Changes in the present law under terms of the pending amendment would also be made in those provisions of the social security act which relate to permanent and total disability. In addition, the so-called benefit categories will be significantly altered if H.R. 7225 is
approved. The biggest change in this section of the new bill reduces the age from sixty-five to sixty-two for the payment of old age benefits for women. I am always somewhat reluctant on legislation of this type to undertake any comprehensive discussion of it while the bill is still at the committee stage. I mention this because many times legislation is drastically altered between the time it is received by the committee and final action is taken by the Senate. Rather, in calling your attention to the status of the social security bill at the present time, I hope to encourage additional attention to the legislation to an extent which will prompt interested parties to express their opinion. In this way, I will be able to obtain a more complete and accurate appraisal of the views of our Delaware people. For the information of Delaware farmers and others interested in the agricultural program, the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Forestry will soon report proposed legislative changes in the nation’s farm program. Protracted debate will undoubtedly follow the reporting of any farm bill to the Senate floor, and we can expect a generous portion of comments on this subject in the near future.

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, speaking from the Senate Office Building in Washington.

[End 05:11]