

5-19-1905

Correspondence, John C. Stennis, May 26-June 2, 1966

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarsjunction.msstate.edu/jcs-civil-rights-correspondence>

Preferred Citation

[Title], John C. Stennis Collection. Mississippi Political Collections, Mississippi State University Libraries.

This Letter is brought to you for free and open access by the John C. Stennis Digital Collections at Scholars Junction. It has been accepted for inclusion in Civil Rights Correspondence by an authorized administrator of Scholars Junction. For more information, please contact scholcomm@msstate.libanswers.com.

[REDACTED]
PRENTISS, MISSISSIPPI

BOARD OF TRUSTEES
[REDACTED]

May 26, 1966

WASHINGTON OFFICE
MAY 31 1966
RECORDED
JOHN STENNIS

Honorable John Stennis
U. S. Congress
Washington, D. C.

Subject: Compliance to Title VI of Civil Rights Act of 1964
Case #04119

Dear Mr. Stennis:

At a special meeting of the Board of Trustees of this hospital held on June 30, 1965, a motion was made instructing the administrator to sign the Compliance Certificate of Title VI of Civil Rights Act of 1964. This motion was seconded and passed unanimously. The president asked for negative votes to be recorded, and there were none. Since that meeting, the following changes have been made in an effort to bring this hospital into Compliance to Title VI.

1. All official hospital records, all newspaper and radio lists, all emergency room, laboratory, x-ray, and other records show the marital status by Mr., Mrs., or Miss.
2. All patients and employees are addressed as Mr., Mrs., or Miss.
3. All signs indicating colored or white have been removed.
4. Persons use the following facilities without regard to race, color, or national origin: entrances, admission offices, waiting rooms, dining room, toilet facilities, general service facilities, clinics, out patient services, seating arrangements, waiting lines, and parking areas. These services are used by all patients at the same time without regard to race, color, or national origin.
5. There are other areas in the Guidelines that are not applicable to this hospital due to its size.

With the above being a true and factual picture of what this hospital has done in the past year, it appears that the only area in which we would not comply according to the Guidelines would be in bi-racial occupancy. Please allow me to quote [REDACTED], Executive Director of Mississippi Hospital Association, in a recent news release.

"Hospitals sometimes have such a situation arise when two whites--or two negroes--are in the room with each other--in which case a transfer of one patient has always been considered advisable from a medical point of view. Under Title VI, if this situation arises in a hospital, we assume this transfer could still take place so long as the situation involved a room with two white patients or two negro patients. But if such a situation arises in a room occupied by one white and one negro, then it's our understanding that Title VI would prevent the transfer of one of these patients--even though it might be the negro who is demanding the transfer."

We have found in this hospital that both white and negro citizens feel that bi-racial occupancy throughout the hospital would not be in the best interest of good sound patient care and that the only interest that the 13,500 people of this county have is that their medical needs be met in a professional manner.

In a recent inspection by a team from the U. S. Public Health Service, it was found that the questionnaire which we submitted to the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, March 1, 1966, was correct. We were then questioned with regard to air conditioning, why colored people sat at the same table in the mixed dining room instead of sitting at tables with white employees, and the size of different rest rooms in the lobby areas, among other things. It seemed that they did not wish to believe the statements and explanations that I gave them.

I question and resent this assault on my integrity as I have always felt that good honest and straightforward statements and answers are the best policy in all dealings, both private and public.

The Board of Trustees, Medical Staff, and the general public resents the suggestion that discriminatory factors exist in this hospital. We also feel that Assurance of Compliance as set forth in the most recent Guidelines is inconsistent with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. I feel that our actions satisfy the requirements of Title VI and that this hospital should immediately be certified for participation in all federal programs.

Yours very truly,



Administrator



RICHARD B. RUSSELL, GA., CHAIRMAN

JOHN STENNIS, MISS.
STUART SYMINGTON, MO.
HENRY M. JACKSON, WASH.
SAM J. ERVIN, JR., N.C.
HOWARD W. CANNON, NEV.
ROBERT C. BYRD, W. VA.
STEPHEN M. YOUNG, OHIO
DANIEL K. INOUE, HAWAII
THOMAS J. MCINTYRE, N.H.
DANIEL B. BREWSTER, MD.
HARRY F. BYRD, JR., VA.

LEVERETT SALTONSTALL, MASS.
MARGARET CHASE SMITH, MAINE
STROM THURMOND, S.C.
JACK MILLER, IOWA
JOHN G. TOWER, TEX.

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

WILLIAM H. DARDEN, CHIEF OF STAFF
CHARLES B. KIRBOW, CHIEF CLERK

June 2, 1966

[REDACTED]
Administrator
[REDACTED]
Prentiss, Mississippi


Dear [REDACTED]:

This will acknowledge your letter of May 26 with reference to the compliance agreement and guidelines which the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare seeks to impose on [REDACTED] under the provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act.

I do not blame you one bit for your attitude about the attempts of the federal government to impose these harsh rules upon the hospitals, and I certainly agree that these federal officials have gone entirely too far in pushing the passage of these laws and then making a most unreasonable interpretation of the law as written. Frankly, I do not think there is any basis for their insistence on bi-racial occupancy of the same hospital rooms. It does not seem that this would be for the best interest of any patient.

I am glad you let me know of the situation which faces you and I think you are approaching it in the right manner. As I understand, you are not requesting any specific action at this time. But I do want to assure you that I stand ready to help in every way I can and I hope some way can be found to relieve your hospital and the other hospitals in our State from the application of these unjustified regulations. I am working with others here in

32 - Hospitals -
(Guidelines)
file


Page Two

an effort to find some solution and although I have not been to encouraged about the prospects, I will certainly continue my efforts.

With fond good wishes, I am

Your friend,

John Stennis
United States Senator

JS:cb