Department of Commerce and Labor
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
Washington

LIGHT HOUSE BOARD
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December 21, 1905.

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The Chairman of

The Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce,

House of Representatives.

Sir:

This Department has the honor to acknowledge the receipt of a letter dated December 14, 1905, from your Committee enclosing a copy of H. R. Bill No. 196, "To authorize the construction of a light-house keeper's dwelling at Buffalo Harbor,New York", on which suggestions are asked touching the merits of the bill and the propriety of its passage.

In reply this Department begs leave to state that the Light-House Board, to which this matter was referred, reports that in its last four annual reports it recommends that an appropriation of $6,200 be made for this purpose, and that it is still of opinion that this appropriation should be made. This appropriation is also recommended on page 208 of the current Book of Estimates.

The following is an extract from page 128 of the Board's annual report for 1905 relative to this subject:

"79. Buffalo Breakwater, north end, southerly side "of the main entrance to Buffalo Harbor, New York.- The "following recommendation, made in the Board's last three annual reports, is renewed:

"This station is situated at the north end of the old breakwater at Buffalo, N. Y. and is the fixed outpost for "the main entrance to Buffalo Harbor. The structure is "located on a crib, which is within the breakwater, and "room allotted to it is very limited. The two light-keepers stationed here take care of the fourth-order light "and operate the steam fog-signal and a fog-bell, and all this requires mechanical ability and experience of a high "order. The yearly salary of the keeper is $560 and that of the assistant keeper $450, and no dwelling is provided "for them. This is an important station and should com-"mand the services of first-class men for keepers. But the "salaries paid are inadequate, although they would be "sufficient if a proper dwelling was furnished them and "the keepers did not have to hire quarters for their fami-"lies and pay rent for them out of their meager compensa-"tion. A double dwelling can be built on the shore, on Government land, near the south pier. This site would be "convenient for these keepers, as they must row to and "from the light-station in a small boat. It is estimated that a suitable keepers' dwelling can be erected here for $6,200, and the Board recommends that an appropriation of that amount be made therefor. "

This Department concurs in these views of the Light-House Board, and has the honor to recommend the passage of the bill in question.

Respectfully,

Secretary.