

[Fairfax 1783 11 21, Record Group 78, Library of Virginia]

To the Honorable, the Speaker and Gentlemen of the House of Delegates. The Petition of sundry Freeholders and inhabitants of the Parish of Fairfax in Fairfax County Humbly Sheweth

That the power exercised by Vestries of filling up their own vacancies is attended with many inconsistencies, and inconsistent with the Principals of Republican Government, for by the Exercise of such a power, Vestries will, in a short time, be composed of such as are not the choice of the People. That this is actually the case in this Parish, cannot be denied; for as the vestry is now constituted, there is only one Member in being that was of the original Choice, and for Bodies thus self constituted and Appointed, to be invested with a power of buying sums of Tobacco upon a People they do not represent, and by whom they were not selected and appointed. Your Petitioners apprehend is a measure unconstitutional and from which much Evil will result.

That the mode prescribed for making Provision for the Parish Poor, as by Law now enacted by Vestries and Church wardens to be chosen from amongst those of one Profession only, deprives many good People of Rights and Privileges Essential to Freemen, your petitioners wish therefore to see a more equal and Liberal plan adopted to serve the desirable purpose of the present Law.

Your Petitioners wish not to prescribe to the Honorable House, yet would humbly submit to their serious consideration whither those unfortunate people might not be better and more Constitutionally provided for were a Law passed enabling those who have the right of suffrage in the Parish (in such cases), triannually to elect a sufficient number of Freeholders, Residents in the Parish and investing them, or a majority of them, with the same power and subjecting them to the same penalties, that the vestries and Church wardens are now invested with and liable to, yet confined to the sole objects of providing for the Poor, binding orphan children, and such other matters in that particular line as have been exercised by Vestries heretofore.

Your Petitioners apprehend this Mode would give some moral satisfaction and accomplish all the objects of the Designation, and we trust the Honorable House will be pleased to take the Prayer of this Petition into consideration, and grant such Relief in the Premises as they in their wisdom shall deem proper and your Petitioners shall we Pray.

John Lomax	Robert M.Crea	Jesse Taylor	Wm Ramsay
	John Wise	Lawrence Hoof	Richard Arell
Wm Harthorne	Jn ^o Oliphant	John Bryce	John Harper
Moses Tandy		John Gretter	James Hendricks
	John Hendricks	Mathew Brown	
J Allison		Jacob Hess	Wm Hepburn
Tho ^s Kirkpatrick	Robert Adam	James Wright	Peter Wise
Cys. Copper	Adam Lynn	Wm Duvall	

John Fitzgerald
W^m Hunter
James Lownes
Jacob Cox
Robert Bryce
Edward Ramsay
Robert Lyle
John Butcher
Wm Paton
Edw^d Sanford
James Lawrason
Thomas Barclay

W^m Lyles
Colin MacIver
George Richards
Oliver Price
Sam. Arell
J^{os} Greenwall
RH Gerrard
Daniel McPherson
Henry Lyles
Robert Allison
Henry Bush

Josiah Watson
D. Arell
And^w Walez
Thomas Fleming
Dennis Ramsay

Will Hunter
Thomas Lindsay
John Graham
James Connear
Ralph Longden
Edw^d Payne

[Reverse]
Fairfax parish
petition
November 21st 1783
referred to Religion—
Vestry Bill.