
IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES.

FEBRUARY 28, 1862.

Mr. CLARK asked, and by unanimous consent obtained, leave to bring in the following bill; which was read twice, and ordered to be printed.

A BILL

To abolish slavery in the District of Columbia.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*
3 That neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except for
4 crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall
5 hereafter be in the District of Columbia; and all persons held
6 to service or labor within said District, commonly called
7 slaves, are hereby discharged from such service or labor, and
8 are set free: *Provided, always,* That any person lawfully held
9 to service or labor in any State by the laws thereof, and
10 escaping from a lawful owner into said District, may be law-
11 fully reclaimed and delivered to the person claiming his or
12 her labor or service as aforesaid.

1 SEC. 2. *And be it further enacted,* That no slave escap-
2 ing into said District, or into any State from any other State,
3 shall be delivered up, or in any way impeded or hindered of

4 his or her liberty, except for crime or some offence against
5 the laws, unless the person claiming said fugitive shall first
6 make oath, supported by other satisfactory proof, that the
7 person to whom the labor or service of such fugitive is alleged
8 to be due is his or her lawful owner, and has not borne arms
9 against the United States in the present rebellion, nor in any
10 way given aid and comfort thereto.

1 SEC. 3. *And be it further enacted,* That any person, resi-
2 dent in said District, whose slave may be set at liberty by the
3 provisions of this act, may, within six months after the pas-
4 sage thereof, and not afterwards, apply by petition in writing
5 to the Court of Claims for remuneration for the loss of the
6 services of such slave; setting forth in said petition, which
7 shall be under oath—

8 First. That the petitioner is a resident of the District of
9 Columbia; is and always has been true to his or her allegi-
10 ance to the United States; that he or she has not borne arms
11 against the government of the United States in the present
12 rebellion, nor in any way given aid or comfort thereto.

13 Second. The title of the petitioner to the labor or ser-
14 vice of said slave; whether there is any dispute about the
15 same, or whether any other person is interested in said ser-
16 vices or slave, or makes any claim thereto, and if so who;
17 and what claim is made; and—

18 Thirdly. The name, age, sex, habits, usual health, de-

19 facts, and all other personal peculiarities of said slave, which
20 may enable said court to identify him or her, or determine the
21 value of his or her services.

1 SEC. 4. *And be it further enacted,* That said court shall
2 receive and hear said petitions, and determine the truth of
3 the allegations therein, and the validity of the respective
4 claims of the petitioners to the services of the slaves therein
5 described, and, if determined in favor of any of said peti-
6 tioners, to fix and apportion the value of the services of the
7 slaves of said petitioners respectively in money, and make a
8 record thereof: *Provided, however,* That the entire sum of
9 values so fixed and apportioned shall not exceed in the aggre-
10 gate an amount equal to three hundred dollars for each slave
11 over five years of age, thus set free, and to whose services a
12 loyal resident of said District has a valid claim, which has
13 been allowed by said court.

1 SEC. 5. *And be it further enacted,* That nothing shall
2 be allowed by said court for the services of any slave child
3 under five years of age; but such child shall be delivered to
4 its mother or father, if alive; and if there be no father or
5 mother alive, or within said District, to its next of kin, or
6 some person who will take charge of and care for the same;
7 and said child shall forever after the passage of this act be a
8 free person.

1 SEC. 6. *And be it further enacted,* That no person who

2 has borne arms against the United States in the present re-
3 bellion, or who has in any way given aid or comfort thereto,
4 or who has advocated the cause of said rebellion, shall receive
5 any compensation of the United States for the loss of any
6 slave set free by the provisions of this act, but his claim shall
7 be wholly disallowed by said court.

1 SEC. 7. *And be it further enacted,* That when there
2 shall be any dispute in regard to the ownership of any slave,
3 or one or more persons may be interested in his services, or
4 have any lien upon the same, the said court in any case which
5 may arise shall have full power to summon all the parties before
6 it, and to make such order in the premises and such disposition
7 and division of the sum allowed for the services of the slave
8 as justice and equity may require; but in no case shall the
9 slave be deprived of his freedom, and to this end, and for a
10 correct judgment in any case arising under this act, said court
11 may examine all parties under oath, and bring the slave before
12 them for identification and valuation.

1 SEC. 8. *And be it further enacted,* That said court
2 shall, within twelve months from the passage of this act,
3 make a full and final report of the findings, appraisement,
4 and orders to the Secretary of the Treasury, embracing in
5 said report the names, ages, owners, and valuation of all slaves
6 over five years of age thus set free, and belonging to loyal
7 owners in said district, and the names, ages, and owners, but

8 no valuation, of slaves belonging to disloyal owners, when
9 petitions have been presented to, and disallowed by, said court;
10 and the Secretary shall thereupon cause the sums so appor-
11 tioned to loyal claimants for services of slaves over five and
12 under sixty years of age to be paid from the treasury of the
13 United States to the parties entitled thereto, under the pro-
14 visions of this act.

1 SEC. 9. *And be it further enacted,* That the sums fixed
2 and apportioned as aforesaid for the services of all slaves over
3 sixty years of age, set free by the provisions of this act, shall
4 not be paid by the Secretary of the Treasury to the claimants
5 or owners of said slaves; but the said sums shall be paid to
6 the mayors of Washington and Georgetown, respectively, to
7 be expended by the mayors aforesaid for the time being for
8 the support and maintenance of said slaves, from time to
9 time as they may need. And if the owner of any such slave,
10 over sixty years of age, neglects or refuses to apply to said
11 court to have his value so fixed, said slave may appoint an
12 attorney, who may apply for him.

1 SEC. 10. *And be it further enacted,* That there is hereby
2 appropriated from the treasury of the United States a sum
3 not exceeding one million of dollars to carry this act into
4 effect.

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