

S. 3571

Recd 14 July

Public 127

Thirty-Seventh Congress of the United States of America;

At the *Second* Session,

Begun and held at the city of Washington, on Monday, the *Second* day of December, one thousand eight hundred and sixty-one

AN ACT

Supplementary to the "Act for the release of certain persons held to service or labor in the District of Columbia" approved April sixteen, eighteen hundred and sixty-two.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

That

the oath or affirmation required by the second section of the act entitled "An act for the release of certain persons held to service or labor in the District of Columbia" to verify the statements or petitions in writing filed before the commissioners, under the act aforesaid, of persons holding claims to service or labor against persons of African descent, freed and discharged therefrom, under the act aforesaid, may in all cases in which the persons holding claims, as aforesaid, are infants or minors, be made by the guardian or by any other person, whether separately or jointly, having the custody, management, or control by law of the person and property of such infants or minors; and that in all cases in which the persons holding claims as aforesaid are non-residents of the District of Columbia, or resident absentees, the oath or affirmation required as aforesaid may be made by the attorney or agent of said non-resident or resident absentee; and in all cases in which the statements or petitions, required as aforesaid, of persons in the military or naval service of the United States, shall have been or may be hereafter verified before any commander of any military post, or of any officer having a separate command of any military force in the field, or before any captain, commander, or lieutenant commanding in the navy, the same shall be received and deemed valid, to all intents and purposes, as fully as if the verification had been or were made before any officer competent by law to take and administer oaths and affirmations. Provided, That the commissioners shall be satisfied that, at the time of the verification aforesaid, the person making the same was employed in the military or naval service of the United States within the jurisdiction of a rebellious State or Territory, and unable to make the oath or affirmation required, as aforesaid, before any officer authorized by law to take or administer the same, holding allegiance to the United States. Sec. 2. And be it further enacted, That if any person having claim to the service or labor of any person or persons in the District of Columbia by reason of African descent, shall neglect or refuse to file with the clerk of the circuit court of the District of Columbia the statement in writing, or schedule provided

in the ninth section of the act approved April sixteen, eighteen hundred and sixty-two, to which this is supplementary, then it shall be lawful for the person or persons, whose services are claimed as aforesaid, to file such statement in writing or schedule setting forth the particular facts mentioned in said ninth section; and the said clerk shall receive and record the same as provided in said section on receiving fifty cents each therefor. Sec. 3. And be it further enacted, That whenever the facts set forth in the said statement or schedule shall be found by the commissioners to be true, the said clerk and his successors in office shall prepare, sign, and deliver certificates, as prescribed in the tenth section of the act to which this is supplementary, to such person or persons as shall file their statements in pursuance of the foregoing section, in all respects the same as if such statements were filed by the person having claim to their service or labor. Sec. 4. And be it further enacted, That all persons held to service or labor under the laws of any state, and who at any time since the sixteenth day of April, anno Domini eighteen hundred and sixty-two, by the consent of the person to whom such service or labor is claimed to be owing, have been actually employed within the District of Columbia, or who shall be hereafter thus employed, are hereby declared free, and forever released from such servitude, anything in the laws of the United States or of any State to the contrary notwithstanding. Sec. 5. And be it further enacted, That in all judicial proceedings in the District of Columbia there shall be no exclusion of any witness on account of color.

Calushat G. Brown

Speaker of the House of Representatives

Stephen A. Foster

President of the Senate pro-tempore

Approved, July 12, 1862.

Abraham Lincoln

I certify that this act
did originate in the Senate.

M. P. Forney

Secretary.