

CHAPTER 656.

AN ACT to promote the public health, convenience and welfare by levying, ditching and draining the wet, swamp and overflowed lands within the State, and providing for the establishment of levee or draining districts for the purpose of enlarging or changing any natural water courses, and for digging ditches or canals for securing better drainage or providing better outlets for drainage for building levees or embankments and installing tide gates or pumping plants for the reclamation of overflowed lands, and prescribing a method for so doing; and providing for the assessment and collection of the cost and expense of the same, and issuing and selling bonds therefor, and for the care and maintenance of such improvements, when constructed.

SECTION 1. *Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Maryland,* That the Board of County Commissioners of any county in the State of Maryland shall have jurisdiction, power and authority to establish a levee or drainage district or districts in their county, and to locate and establish levees, drains or canals, and cause to be constructed, straightened, widened or deepened any ditch, drain or water course, and to build levees or embankments and erect tide water gates and pumping plants for the purpose of draining and reclaiming wet, swamp or overflowed lands; and it is hereby declared that the drainage of swamps and the drainage of the surface water from agricultural lands and the reclamation of tidal marshes shall be considered a public benefit and conducive to the public health, convenience, utility and welfare.

SEC. 2. *Be it enacted,* That whenever a petition signed by a majority of the resident landowners in a proposed drainage district or by the owners of three-fifths of all the land which will be affected by or assessed for the expense of the proposed improvements shall be filed in the office of the clerk of the Board of County Commissioners of any county in which a part of said lands are located, setting forth that any specific body or district of land in the county and adjoining counties, described in such a way as to convey an intelligent idea as to the location of such land, is subject to overflow or too wet for cultivation, and the public benefit or utility or the public health, convenience or welfare will be promoted by draining, ditching or leveeing the same, or by changing or improving the natural water courses, and setting forth therein, as far as