

CHAPTER 200.

AN ACT to add a new section to Article 54 of the Annotated Code of Maryland (1924 Edition), title "Land Office," sub-title "Commissioner—His Powers and Duties," said new section to be known as Section 52, to follow immediately after Section 51 of said Article, to provide for the preservation of the early land records prior to the establishment of the abstract system, and to authorize the Commissioner of the Land Office to secure any record book prior to 1787 for the purpose of copying.

WHEREAS, Throughout the State of Maryland in the various offices of the Clerks of Courts, are deposited three hundred and seventy-three (373) volumes of land records, covering the period between 1642 and 1787, all prior to the general abstract system which has been in force since 1786; and

WHEREAS, In many instances these books are showing the ravages of time, and so may be lost to posterity if action is not taken to ensure their preservation; and

WHEREAS, The Commissioner of the Land Office is equipped with the necessary machinery to enable him to make a rapid copy of such books, but is not possessed of sufficient authority to demand said records from the various Clerks of Courts; now, therefore

SECTION 1. *Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Maryland*, That a new section be and it is hereby added to Article 54 of the Annotated Code of Maryland (1924 Edition), title "Land Office," sub-title "Commissioner—His Powers and Duties," said new section to be known as Section 52, to follow immediately after Section 51 of said Article, and to read as follows:

52. The Commissioner of the Land Office is hereby authorized to demand any record book prior to 1787 from any Clerk of Court in the State of Maryland, giving a receipt therefor, and for the purpose of copying said record by photographic process, but that said record shall not be kept longer by the said Commissioner than shall be necessary for said purpose, not to exceed sixty days; and shall be returned by said Commissioner to said Clerk of Court, the expense of transportation and insurance to be borne by the Land Office.

SEC. 2. *And be it further enacted*, That this Act shall take effect June 1, 1929.

Approved April 2, 1929.