

number of the land and slaveholders and others in Kent county, to petition the Legislature to pass laws for the protection and security of this species of property, and especially for the establishment of a special police to guard all the avenues of escape; to arrest all absconding and suspicious persons, and with ample powers to effect the purposes of their organization; therefore,

SECTION 1. *Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Maryland,* That the county commissioners for Kent county may, at their discretion, on or before the third Monday of March, annually, or as soon thereafter as practicable, appoint not less than ten nor more than twelve persons, to act as a special police force in the county, in addition to the regular police officers, and who shall be qualified for their posts, entertain opinions favorable to the recovery and security of slave property, and who shall, before they proceed to act, make oath before some Justice of the Peace, that they will faithfully and diligently execute and perform all the duties required of them by this act, a certificate of which oath shall be filed, with the Clerk of the Circuit Court and be recorded among the records of the county, and the recording fees be paid by the said county.

Commissioners authorised to appoint a special police.

SEC. 2. *And be it enacted,* That the duties of the said police shall be as follows: to guard by night the various thoroughfares and avenues of escape for absconding slaves, and that they shall class themselves, or be classed by the county commissioners in such manner, that on every night during the year for which they may be appointed (or as soon thereafter as may be practicable) the said points and places or districts of county to be guarded, shall be guarded and diligently watched by at least three of such force, and that they shall so continue to alternate, that only one-third of such police shall be on duty during any night, except on occasions of public holidays and during christmas week or other special occasions, when the whole police force that may be available shall be on duty; and if, in the opinion of the county commissioners, there shall be localities or districts requiring the service of a special police, not embraced in the general plan above described, they may appoint such additional number not exceeding three, who shall not be compelled to alternate, unless so directed by the county commissioners, and who shall be gov-

Duty of special police.