

24 Holliday St
Baltimore Md
May 2nd 1864

To His Excellency
Wm. Bradford,
Gov^r of the State of Maryland

Sir

I have the honor to enquire whether or not the County Commissioners have been furnished by your direction with the names of all colored men enlisted into the Military service of the U^s State as certified by me, and also furnished with the means of paying the bounty provided by the laws of the State.

Relying on the prompt and cheer full execution of the State laws in regard to bounty, the recruiting officers under my command were instructed to assure these men that their bounty would be paid immediately on their being mustered into the U^s Service.

This assurance has not been realized, except in the City of Baltimore. The recruits have all been ordered out of the State; they have left proper powers of Attorney with me authorizing me to collect and apply their bounty. But it appears from correspondence, verbal and otherwise, that some of the County Commissioners interpret the law in regard to those borne on the rolls as free men, so as to authorize them to with-hold the payment of bounty until their freedom is established.

I have in every case endeavored to preserve on the rolls the exact status of the recruit; all errors have been as far as possible, corrected before transmittal to your excellency, and it is respectfully submitted, that the rolls should be regarded as correct until the contrary is shown; and that it is no part of the duty of the County Commissioners to adjudge in the premises, but merely to collect and pay the bounty in accordance with the facts furnished by the Rolls. If any man set down as free, is in fact a slave, the owner should have preferred his claim here, but having neglected to do so it is presumed that he has waived his right, except that he may make his claim for compensation allowed by the General Government. Upon any other principle it will be impossible for the freemen to get their bounty. They are away doing military duty and consequently unable to appear and prove their freedom. They are already fulfilling their part of the contract, and it would be disgraceful to insist that because their condition as free-men is not proved they cannot be paid.