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An Act Relieving the Inhabitants of this Province from some Difficulties they may be under in paying their Leavys and other just Tobacco Debts this Year.

Whereas it is represented to this present Session of Assembly that by occasion of the great Draught for a considerable time the last Summer, and the great and sudden gusts of winds and Rains which succeeded a great number of the Inhabitants of this Province have not made Tobacco sufficient to pay their Leavys and so much as it might tend to the utter Ruin of many Families especially of the poorer Sort of the Publick Creditors in this scarce year of Tobacco should insist on the receiving the whole of their Claims as aforesaid Be it therefore Enacted by the right Honorable the Lord Proprietary by and with the advice and Consent of his Lordships Governor and the upper and lower Houses of Assembly and the Authority of the same that from and after the end of this present Session of Assembly at any time before the twenty fifth Day of December next it shall and may be lawfull for any of the Inhabitants within this Province that are not in a Capacity to pay any part of their Leavys this year in Tobacco or money, or can only pay some part thereof to apply the use here to any Justice of the Province or County Courts of the Province or City Magistrate the which Justice or Magistrate so applied to is hereby Impowered and required to administer the Oath hereafter appointed by this Act to such of the Inhabitants as shall desire it or if Quakers their Affirmation to the same Effect and likewise to give every such Person a Certificate in the form hereafter prescribed by this Act of his having taken such Oath or Affirmation before them and every such Person that shall have taken such Oath or Affirmation and produced such Certificate from the Justice as aforesaid. And shall produce the same to any of the Commissioners appointed by this Act for the County where they are Inhabitants at any time by the Seventh Day of January next shall not for hereafter directed, nor shall be obliged to pay more on that Account then what they shall declare upon such Oath or Affirmation they can pay. But in all such Cases the Sheriffs of the severall and respective Counties within this Province are hereby required Pursuant to the direction of the Commissioners appointed by this Act for such County to Credit such Persons for their Leavys or such part thereof as they cannot pay untill another year without charging any Interest or forbearance for the same and so as much as if would be to great a Hardship and Burthen upon the said Sheriffs to give such large Credits as the Defalcation occasioned by giving such Credits as aforesaid would Amount to be without being Enabled to make a proportionable Deduction from the Payments for this Year out of the severall Claims due to the Publick Creditors whether it be on Account of the Publick County or Parish Levy or County Poll. Be it therefore Enacted by the Authority advice and Consent aforesaid. that it shall and may be lawfull for the severall and respective Sheriffs of the Counties aforesaid who shall by virtue of this Act be obliged to give such Credits as aforesaid to deduct such a proportionable part to the Defalcations Occasioned thereby as well out of their own Claims and Sallery and Balances due to them for Leavys last year as out of the Claims of the severall Creditors, as shall be directed by the

(Commissioners)