

An ACT to declare and ascertain the privileges of the subjects of France residing within this state.

Preamble.

WHEREAS, in and by the thirteenth article of the treaty of amity and commerce between His Most Christian Majesty and the United States of America, it is provided that the subjects and inhabitants of the said United States, or any of them, shall not be reputed aubains in France, and consequently, shall be exempted from the droit d'aubain, or other similar duty, under what name soever, they may by testament, donation, or otherwise, dispose of their goods, moveable and immoveable; and their heirs, subjects of the said United States, residing whether in France or elsewhere, may succeed them ab intestat, without being obliged to obtain letters of naturalization, and without having the effect of this concession contested or impeded, under pretext of any rights or prerogatives of provinces, cities, or private persons, and the said heirs, whether such by particular title, or ab intestat, should be exempt from the droit d'extinction, or other duty of the same kind, saving, nevertheless, the local rights or duties, as much and as long as similar ones are not established by the United States, or any of them: And whereas, the exemptions aforesaid have been confirmed by a declaration of the Most Christian King, bearing date the twenty-sixth day of July, anno domini seventeen hundred and seventy-eight, by which it is also established that the subjects of the United States of America shall enjoy within his dominions the privileges of nations the most favoured: And whereas, as well upon the ground of equality and reciprocity, as because of the generous and important aid afforded to the United States by the Most Christian King, their great and illustrious ally, in the present war with Great-Britain, suitable returns are due from the said states in general, and from this in particular, by granting and establishing, on our part, like and special privileges and advantages in favour of the subjects of France:

Subjects of France to enjoy the same rights as citizens of this state, &c.

II. *Be it therefore enacted, by the General Assembly of Maryland,* That the subjects of France within this state, who have come or may come to sojourn or reside within the same, for the purposes of commerce or otherwise, shall have and enjoy all and every the rights, privileges, and exemptions, of the full and free citizens of the state, without taking any oath, or giving any promise of allegiance or fidelity to this state.

Proviso.

III. *Provided always,* That nothing herein contained shall be construed to grant to the subjects of France, or the other dominions of His Most Christian Majesty, who shall continue subjects of his said majesty, and not qualify themselves as citizens of this state, any right to purchase or hold lands or real estate, but for their respective lives or for years, or to invest them with the privilege of voting in any election, or the capacity of enjoying any civil office, or of being eligible as governor, member of the council, or general assembly, or as a delegate to congress.

Subjects of France who

IV. *And be it enacted,* That in case any subject of France, or other