

By the S E N A T E, December 13, 1778.

RESOLVED, That no private act shall pass this house upon any petition whatever, unless notice is given by the petitioner or petitioners in some gazette printed in this state for eight successive weeks, and by advertizing at the court-house of the county where such petitioner or petitioners reside, at least eight weeks before the session of assembly to which application is made, that a petition is intended to be preferred, mentioning in such notice the substance of such petition, and evidence of this notice be produced upon hearing such petition.

By order,

R. RIDGELY, cl. sen.

The following message :

By the H O U S E of D E L E G A T E S, December 13, 1778.

May it please your honours,

WE did not expect your dissent to the resolve encreasing the per diem allowance of the general assembly. That either branch of the legislature has a constitutional right to reject any measure proposed by the other, without communicating the reasons which governed their determination, is a point uncontrovertible. That in a subject of such momentous concern as the present, we esteem it our incumbent duty to desire the reasons and motives which influenced your honours in rejecting the resolve above alluded to.

“ That the right in the people to participate in the legislature is the best security of liberty, and the foundation of all free government,” is a fundamental principle of our excellent constitution, and ought to be the basis of every government; that this right, on which the freedom and happiness of the people so much depend, will be infringed or diminished, unless an allowance is made to the members of the general assembly adequate to their actual expences, can easily be demonstrated. It cannot be reasonably expected, that any individual should make a sacrifice of both time and money in the service of the public. Men of limited and moderate estates, whose wisdom, probity, and zeal for the general welfare, are unquestionable, will be excluded from the legislature; they cannot, indeed ought not, in justice to themselves and families, to accept the important trust; self preservation and common prudence dictate a contrary conduct: It follows then necessarily, that the inestimable and constitutional right of suffrage will be abridged and confined; the people will be under the dire necessity of conferring the power of legislation on men of opulent fortunes, who may not be distinguished by their wisdom, probity, or zeal for the public good. The legislature will be composed of such men alone, an aristocracy will be established, oppression and injustice will ensue, and a total subversion of our government may be the final result. We are so well convinced of your honours attachment to the constitution, and your fervent zeal for the public welfare, that we cannot impute your rejection of the resolve to any unworthy motives. The consequences above enumerated, we apprehend, were not foreseen by your honours at the time of giving your dissent.

We are well satisfied that it is not the sense of our constituents that we should transact the public business without such a compensation as would enable us to defray our reasonable expences, and although some of the members, from their local situation, may not be sensible of the inconvenience, yet those would do well to consider the propriety of opposing a measure so just and necessary. We have returned to your honours the said resolve, and request you to reconsider the subject, and reflect on the consequences delineated in the message, and have no doubt it will receive your assent.

By order,

J. DUCKETT, cl. ho. del.

Being prepared, was sent to the senate, with the resolve respecting the per diem allowance to the members of each house, by Mr. Keene and Mr. Wilmer.

ORDERED, That the petition of John Riddle be referred for consideration to the second Tuesday in next session of assembly, and that the evidences then give their attendance.

Robert Goldsborough, Esq; from the senate, delivers to Mr. Speaker the following resolve :

By the S E N A T E, December 13, 1778.

RESOLVED, That the governor and council prepare and lay before the general assembly, at their next meeting, a full and particular estimate of the expences of the civil and military establishment of this state, and make out exact lists of all military and naval stores, and of all cloathing which may be on hand belonging to this state.

By order,

R. RIDGELY, cl. sen.

Which was read and ordered to lie on the table.

Mr. Chase brings in and delivers to Mr. Speaker a bill, entitled, An additional supplement to the act for the better security of the government, which was read the first time and ordered to lie on the table.

The house adjourns till to-morrow morning 9 o'clock.

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