

HOUSE No. 183

By Mr. Herter of Boston, petition (accompanied by resolution, House, No. 183) of Christian A. Herter for adoption of a resolution relative to the work and commending the purposes and efforts of the American Legislators' Association and the Interstate Legislative Reference Bureau. Constitutional Law.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year One Thousand Nine Hundred and Thirty-Two.

Resolution relative to the Work and commending the Efforts of the American Legislators' Association and the Interstate Legislative Reference Bureau.

1 *Whereas*, All experienced persons know that, in
2 each state, legislative problems continually increase,
3 both in number and in complexity; and

4 *Whereas*, It is obvious that, in order to solve such
5 problems most effectively, each legislature must give
6 systematic, scientific and business-like consideration
7 to the actual facts which have a bearing upon each
8 question — to the extent that such facts have been
9 determined by reliable research; and

10 *Whereas*, Each legislature must give similar con-
11 sideration to the methods and experience of other
12 jurisdictions in dealing with problems similar to its
13 own; and

14 *Whereas*, No such problems can be dealt with
15 adequately until facilities are established to assist
16 every inquiring legislator to secure the most accurate

17 information and the most expert advice which are
18 available; and

19 *Whereas*, Experience indicates the necessity for
20 an interstate legislative reference bureau to serve as
21 a clearing house of information between all of the
22 legislative reference services which are now being
23 conducted by numerous states, and also to serve as
24 a clearing house of information between the legisla-
25 tures and all other agencies which are engaged in the
26 study and analysis of legislative problems, such as
27 governmental departments, political science depart-
28 ments of universities, competent reputable associa-
29 tions, and all other sources of information; and

30 *Whereas*, Experience also indicates that, in certain
31 states which do not maintain substantial legislative
32 reference services, there is an imperative need for
33 such an interstate legislative reference bureau, which
34 will assist the legislators of those states to secure
35 whatever information they desire in analyzing the
36 legislative problems which they must determine, and
37 to make more readily accessible for them, without
38 cost, the valuable material which is at all times
39 available from the legislative reference libraries and
40 bureaus of various other states, and from many other
41 reliable sources; and

42 *Whereas*, Every individual legislator in the United
43 States shares the responsibility for improving the
44 present inadequate and unsatisfactory condition of
45 the legislative processes, but neither any individual
46 legislator, nor any group of legislators from one
47 state, can bring about such improvement without
48 the co-operation of legislators of other states; and

49 *Whereas*, Such an interstate legislative reference
50 bureau cannot be maintained by any one state

51 alone, without the co-operation of the legislatures
52 of other states; and

53 *Whereas*, In order to set the machinery in motion
54 to secure the necessary co-operation of the forty-
55 eight legislatures, members of each legislature are
56 working together in the development of the project
57 of the American Legislators' Association; and

58 *Whereas*, The said American Legislators' Associa-
59 tion has now established in the vicinity of the Uni-
60 versity of Chicago, the Interstate Legislative Ref-
61 erence Bureau, which by explicit pledge is without
62 color of politics, partisanship or propaganda, is
63 conducted without profit, and is engaged upon three
64 principal purposes:

65 *First*. To procure promptly for all inquiring state
66 legislators, and their agents, whatever information or
67 advice they desire in connection with any legislative
68 problem, primarily by assisting them to secure, with-
69 out cost, the benefit of all researches conducted by
70 governmental departments, universities, associations,
71 legislative reference bureaus, and other agencies
72 throughout the United States;

73 *Second*. To conduct a systematic study of the leg-
74 islative processes of each of the states, in order to
75 ascertain the practices which contribute most to
76 efficient and economical organization and procedure;
77 and to render all possible assistance to each legisla-
78 ture — and to each legislative reference bureau —
79 which is endeavoring to improve its organization;

80 *Third*. To publish for the benefit of all state legis-
81 lators the monthly magazine, State Government, as
82 well as special Bulletins, and thus to disseminate
83 information which will be helpful to all conscientious
84 students of legislation; and

85 *Whereas*, The American Legislators' Association is
86 promoting acquaintance and mutual understanding
87 among all individuals and organizations officially
88 concerned with the impartial and scientific function-
89 ing of the legislatures of the various states, by the
90 organization of standing committees and advisory
91 boards, and otherwise; and

92 *Whereas*, The character and project of the Amer-
93 ican Legislators' Association have the endorsement,
94 and its organization has the active co-operation, not
95 only of its membership, which consists entirely of
96 members and ex-members of state legislatures, but
97 also of numbers of other responsible citizens, many
98 of whom, having specialized knowledge, are serving
99 on the association's advisory boards; therefore, be it

100 *Resolved*, That the organization of the American
101 Legislators' Association and of the Interstate Legis-
102 lative Reference Bureau are hereby commended as
103 legitimate and constructive efforts to assist the
104 legislatures of the various states in the efficient per-
105 formance of their work.