

HOUSE No. 688

By Mr. Banks of Boston, petition of Laurence H. Banks that Congress be memorialized to enact legislation eliminating the payment of a poll tax as a prerequisite to voting. Constitutional Law.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year One Thousand Nine Hundred and Forty-Eight.

RESOLUTIONS MEMORIALIZING THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES TO ENACT LEGISLATION ELIMINATING THE PAYMENT OF A POLL TAX AS A PREREQUISITE TO VOTING.

1 *Whereas*, Article XV of the Amendments to the
2 Constitution of the United States provides that “the
3 right of citizens of the United States to vote shall
4 not be denied or abridged by the United States, or
5 by any state, on account of race, color or previous
6 condition of servitude”; and

7 *Whereas*, The Constitution further provides that
8 the Congress shall have power to enforce this article
9 by appropriate legislation; and

10 *Whereas*, The poll tax is now being used by some
11 of the states as an instrument to defeat the Constitu-
12 tional guarantees and in denying citizens the right
13 to vote because of race and color; therefore be it,

14 *Resolved*, That the General Court of Massachusetts
15 memorializes the Congress of the United States to
16 enact appropriate legislation whereby payment of a

17 poll tax will be eliminated as a requirement of voting;
18 and be it further

19 *Resolved*, That copies of these resolutions be trans-
20 mitted forthwith by the state secretary to the Presi-
21 dent of the United States, to the presiding officers
22 of each branch of Congress, and to the members
23 thereof from this commonwealth.