

HOUSE No. 372

By Mr. Halliwell of New Bedford, petition of John Halliwell that the voting rights of male persons who are exempt from payment of poll taxes be safeguarded. Election Laws.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act protecting the Voting Rights of Male Persons who are exempt from the Payment of a Poll Tax by Reason of their Age.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 SECTION 1. The first paragraph of section four
2 of chapter fifty-one of the General Laws, as most
3 recently amended by section one of chapter three
4 hundred and forty-five of the acts of nineteen hun-
5 dred and thirty-five, is hereby further amended by
6 inserting after the word "tax" in the tenth line the
7 words: — , of every male inhabitant of the common-
8 wealth seventy years of age or older, residing in their
9 respective cities and towns, — so as to read as fol-
10 lows: — The assessors, assistant assessors, or one or
11 more of them shall annually in January or February,
12 visit every building in their respective cities and
13 towns, and, after diligent inquiry, shall make true
14 lists containing, as nearly as they can ascertain, the

15 name, age, occupation, nationality if not a citizen of
16 the United States, and residence on January first in
17 the preceding year and in the current year, of every
18 male person twenty years of age or older, residing in
19 their respective cities and towns, liable to be assessed
20 for a poll tax, of every male inhabitant of the com-
21 monwealth seventy years of age or older, residing
22 in their respective cities and towns, and of soldiers
23 and sailors exempted from the payment of a poll tax
24 under section five of chapter fifty-nine; and shall
25 also make true lists containing the same facts relative
26 to every woman twenty years of age or older residing
27 in their respective cities and towns.

1 SECTION 2. Section eight of said chapter fifty-
2 one, as most recently amended by section seven of
3 chapter two hundred and fifty-four of the acts of
4 nineteen hundred and thirty-three, is hereby further
5 amended by inserting after the word "if" in the
6 fourth line the words:— a male resident seventy
7 years of age or older or, — so as to read as follows:—
8 *Section 8.* If a male resident in a city or town, except
9 in one having a listing board, on January first was
10 not assessed for a poll tax, or if a male resident seventy
11 years of age or older or an exempted soldier or sailor
12 or a woman in such a city or town was not listed
13 under section four, such person shall, in order to
14 establish his right to be assessed or listed, present to
15 the assessors before the close of registration a sworn
16 statement that he was on said day a resident of such
17 city or town, and a sworn list of his polls and estate.
18 If the assessors are satisfied that such statement is
19 true, they shall assess or list him, as the case may be,
20 and give him a certificate thereof.