

HOUSE No. 874.

Bill accompanying the petition of William M. Brigham for legislation to provide for a system of old age pensions. Probate and Chancery. January 25.

Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

In the Year One Thousand Nine Hundred and Six.

AN ACT

To provide for a System of Old Age Pensions.

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. Any male citizen of the Commonwealth
2 who has attained the age of seventy years or over, and
3 who has paid a poll tax assessed upon himself in the Com-
4 monwealth in each one of not less than twenty-five years,
5 whether such years were consecutive or not, and who has
6 not within five years been convicted of felony in any
7 court of the Commonwealth or elsewhere, and who is
8 certified, in writing, by any member of the general court
9 or of the executive council, or by a selectman, the mayor,

10 a member of the city council, or the treasurer, auditor,
11 city or town clerk of the city or town in which he lives,
12 to be of good moral character and not addicted to the
13 excessive use of intoxicating liquors, shall, on applica-
14 tion to the treasurer and receiver-general, be entitled to
15 receive for the remainder of his life a pension equiva-
16 lent to two dollars a week, to be paid in quarterly pay-
17 ments by the treasurer and receiver-general: *provided*,
18 that for the ten years preceding such application he shall
19 have been a resident of the Commonwealth.

1 SECTION 2. The age of any such applicant for a pen-
2 sion shall be established by a certificate of baptism or
3 by a register of birth with a city or town clerk, or in such
4 other manner as shall be satisfactory to the treasurer and
5 receiver-general.

1 SECTION 3. All poll taxes shall hereafter be paid into
2 the treasury of the Commonwealth by the cities and
3 towns, excepting that the cities and towns may reserve
4 one dollar from each poll tax for their own use.

1 SECTION 4. The amount of such annual pensions to
2 be paid in any year shall be taken, so far as may be, from
3 the amounts received by the treasurer and receiver-general
4 for poll taxes. He is hereby authorized and directed to
5 fix the amount of the poll tax for that year, to be assessed
6 upon those desiring to avail themselves of the benefits
7 of this act, at such a sum, not exceeding five dollars, as
8 will approximately cover the amount so estimated of the
9 pensions which will be payable in the following year.
10 If the amount thus derived from poll taxes is not suffi-
11 cient to pay the said pensions in any year, the deficiency
12 shall be paid out of the treasury of the Commonwealth.

1 SECTION 5. Section one of chapter twelve of the Re-
2 vised Laws is hereby amended by striking out all of said
3 section and inserting in place thereof the following:—
4 *Section 1.* A poll tax of two dollars shall be assessed
5 on every male inhabitant of the Commonwealth above
6 the age of twenty years, whether a citizen of the United
7 States or an alien, except pensioners under this act, and
8 except that every such male inhabitant who may desire
9 hereafter to avail himself of the benefits of this act may,
10 in lieu of said poll tax of two dollars, pay the poll tax
11 fixed by the treasurer and receiver-general under the pro-
12 visions of section four of chapter of the acts
13 of the year nineteen hundred and six, and all legal costs
14 and charges which may accrue against any person in
15 the collection of his poll tax may be added to the amount
16 of said tax, whether the inhabitant elects to pay the tax
17 of two dollars or the tax the amount of which is fixed
18 by the treasurer and receiver-general according to the
19 provisions of section four of said chapter.

1 SECTION 6. The payment of a poll tax assessed pre-
2 vious to the passage of this act according to the pro-
3 visions of law then existing shall be deemed a payment
4 within the provisions of this act, but after the passage
5 of this act no payment of any poll tax, except such as the
6 treasurer and receiver-general is authorized to fix under
7 the provisions of section four of this act, shall be deemed
8 to entitle the person so paying to receive the benefits of
9 this act.

1 SECTION 7. The treasurer and receiver-general is
2 hereby authorized to employ such clerical assistance as
3 may be necessary to carry out the provisions of this act,
4 to prepare the necessary forms, to make regulations for

5 the payment of pensions as aforesaid. For these pur-
6 poses he may expend from the treasury of the Common-
7 wealth such a sum as may be necessary, not exceeding
8 thousand dollars. The pensions hereby au-
9 thorized to be paid shall begin to be paid on the first day
10 of March in the year nineteen hundred and six, and the
11 pension year shall begin on the first day of December in
12 every year and end on the last day of November.

1 SECTION 8. This act shall take effect upon its passage.