

HOUSE No. 364.

Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, April 26, 1862.

The Committee on the Judiciary, who were instructed by an Order of the House, to report a Bill declaratory of the meaning of the Acts in aid of Volunteers,

REPORT:

On conference with municipal authorities interested in the subject-matter, and also with the Auditor of the Commonwealth, the Committee find that the only question presented in the case is whether the municipal authorities of towns and cities may, on application of the wife or other person dependent on a volunteer, make payment for any past time within the period of enlistment; and the object of the proposed bill is to declare the meaning of the acts above mentioned in this report.

The Committee do not doubt, that, according to the true meaning of those acts, municipal authorities may in their discretion go back a reasonable time to relieve present necessities, which are caused or augmented by immediately previous wants, and are the continuation of such preceding necessities. They do not think any controversy, regarding such back payments

for a reasonable time, judiciously and discreetly made, will arise between the respective municipal authorities and the Commonwealth.

But they consider it inexpedient to legislate on the subject, at least at present, and they therefore request to be discharged from the instruction imposed on them by the vote of the House.

Per order,

C. CUSHING.