# Supplemental Appendix

A BILL ESTABLISHING A PROVISION FOR TEACHERS

OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION

Whereas the general diffusion of Christian knowledge hath a natural tendency to correct the morals of men, restrain their vices, and preserve the peace of society, which cannot be effected without a competent provision for learned teachers, who may be thereby enabled to devote their time and attention to the duty of instructing such citizens as, from their circumstances and want of education, cannot otherwise attain such knowledge, and it is judged that such provision may be made by the Legislature without counteracting the liberal principle heretofore adopted and intended to be preserved by abolishing all distinctions of preeminence amongst the different societies or communities of Christians;

Be it therefore enacted by the General Assembly, That, for the support of Christian teachers, percentum on the amount, or in the pound on the sum payable for tax on the property within this Commonwealth is hereby assessed, and shall be paid by every person chargeable with the said tax at the time the same shall become due, and the Sheriffs of the several Counties shall have power to levy and collect the same in the same manner and under [p. 73] the like restrictions and limitations as are or may be prescribed by the laws for raising the Revenues of this State.

And be it enacted, That, for every sum so paid, the Sheriff or Collector shall give a receipt expressing therein to what society of Christians the person from whom he may receive the same shall direct the money to be paid, keeping a distinct account thereof in his books. The Sheriff of every County, shall, on or before the \_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in every year, return to the Court, upon oath, two alphabetical lists of the payments to him made, distinguishing in columns opposite to the names of the persons who shall have paid the same, the society to which the money so paid was by them appropriated, and one column for the names where no appropriation shall be made. One of which lists, after being recorded in a book to be kept for that purpose, shall be filed by the Clerk in his office; the other shall by the Sheriff be fixed up in the Court-house, there to remain for the inspection of all concerned. And the Sheriff, after deducting five percentum for the collection, shall forthwith pay to such person or persons as shall be appointed to receive the same by the Vestry, Elders, or Directors, however denominated of each such society, the sum so stated to be due to that society; or in default thereof, upon the motion of such person or persons to the next or any succeeding Court, execution shall be awarded for the same against the Sheriff and his security, his and their executors or administrators; provided that ten days previous notice be given of such motion. And upon every such execution, the Officer serving the same shall proceed to immediate sale of the estate taken and shall not accept of security for payment at the end of three months, nor to have the goods forthcoming at the day of sale; for his better direction wherein, the Clerk shall endorse upon every such execution that no security of any kind shall be taken. [p. 74] And be it further enacted, That the money to be raised by virtue of this Act, shall be by the Vestries Elders, or Directors of each religious society, appropriated to a provision for a Minister or Teacher of the Gospel of their denomination, or the providing places of divine worship, and to none other use whatsoever; except in the denominations of Quakers and Menonists, who may receive what is collected from their members, and place it in their general fund, to be disposed of in a manner which they shall think best calculated to promote their particular mode of worship.

And be it enacted, That all sums which at the time of payment to the Sheriff or Collector may not be appropriated by the person paying the same, shall be accounted for with the Court in manner as by this Act is directed, and after deducting for his collection, the Sheriff shall pay the amount thereof (upon account certified by the Court to the Auditors of Public Accounts, and by them to the Treasurer) into the public Treasury, to be disposed of under the direction of the General Assembly, for the encouragement of seminaries of learning within the Counties whence such sums shall arise, and to no other use or purpose whatsoever.

THIS Act shall commence, and be in force, from and after the \_\_\_day of \_\_\_\_\_ in the year \_\_\_\_.

A Copy from the Engrossed Bill.

rj:

JOHN BECKLEY, C.H.D.

lj:

Washington Mss. (Papers of George Washington, Vol. 21); Library of Congress.\*

\* This copy of the Assessment Bill is from one of the handbills which, on December 24, 1784, when the third reading of the bill was postponed, were ordered distributed to the Virginia counties by the House of Delegates. See Journal of the Virginia House of Delegates, December 24, 1784; Eckenrode, 102-103. The bill is therefore in its final form, for it never again reached the floor of the House. Eckenrode, 113.