

To the Honourable the Speaker & Gentlemen of the House of Delegates of the Commonwealth of Virginia The Petition of Divers of the Freeholders and other Free-Inhabitants of Amherst County

Sheweth That some of your Petitioners have seen, and the rest have heard of the Dra^t. of a Bill bro^t. into your Hon^{ble}. House last Session For giving Free and equal Liberty & Privileges in matters of Religion to all the Inhabitants of this Commonwealth - which We apprehend was Printed and Dispersed by Order of your Hon^{ble}. House That they might at the next Session to the better & more fully inform of the sentiments of the People in General before they proceed to determine finally upon this great & Important Point - And we assure you Gentlemen, It is with much Satisfaction That we your Petitioners who are Compo^sd of Church of Eng^land-men, Presbyterians, Baptists & Methodists do all unanimously with One Voice here by declare to your Hon^{ble}. House our hearty Assent Concurrence & Approbation to the purport of the said Bill and desire that the same may be pass'd into a Law. - Fully Persuaded, Gentlemen, That the Religion of Jesus Christ may and ought to be Committed to the Protection Guidance and Blessing of its Divine Author, & needs not the Interposi^{ti}on of any Human Power for its Establishment & Support we most earnestly desire and pray that not only an Universal Toleration may take Place, but that all the Subjects of this Free State may be put upon the same footing and enjoy equal Liberties and Privileges, which we think (consistent with the 16th Paragraph of the Declaration of Rights) can no longer with any shadow of Justice be withheld. - Permit us Gentlemen only further to observe As it is generally allowed that Force or Constraint when applyed to any of the enjoyments of Sense do entirely marr & destroy all the satisfactions which would result from them - How astonishing is it then, That Religion which Consists in a Voluntary offering up our souls to God, and devoting our Bodies to his Service, should be bound down to any one particular Form, devised by only meer Men like ourselves Or those who Refuse it (besides providing for their own) must be burthensd with Taxes & Contributions for the support of the Ministers & Teachers of another Form of Worship which their Consciences will not allow them to conform to - Justice banishes Reason looks with disdain, & Religion looses her Angels Face, and looks pale & sickly, at the thought of such unrighteous Distinctions. - And we earnestly desire & instruct our our worthy Faithful Representatives for this County & District Nicholas Cabell and John Rose Esq^s. Delegates, & William Cabell Esq^r. Senator, to vote for & use your best endeavours to promote a Total final Repeal of all laws giving Rise to them. That the Almighty may inspire the Councils & give success to all the Determinations of your Hon^{ble}. House for both the temporal & Eternal Interests of the whole Community We your Petitioners, Gentlemen, in Duty bound, shall ever Pray

David Shelton	Samuel Dixon	James M. Alexander	James Hopkins
Robert Wright	Le ^o Riquet	Alexander W. Alexander	John Kirk
James Wright	Thos ^o Johnston	Glossop Goddwell	William Fitzpatrick
William Coins	John 2 ^d Wren	William Horrell	Samuel King
Peter Parrish		James M. Alexander Sr	James Houstgomery
Pa ^r t let Esq ^r		John M. Alexander	John Culp

William Chestnut Chas. Prichard
Wm Wright Junr Land Edmunds
Benjamin Plunket
George Fuller Jas. Dimmock
Govering William Thompson
Deuben Jordan John Edmunds
David Clarke Eleazar Chiefest
John Harris
Andrew Wright
James Montgomery
Peter Martine
Robert Mayo
Saml Conder

Alexr Witt
William Horrell
John New
John Lancaster
Thomas Horrell
Jas Horrell
Saml Witt
David Witt
John Wright

The Landers
David Saunders
Alexander Mart
Wm Woodcroft
Charles Mac Clapper

John Cartwrights
Barthl. Cash
Tho. Dickerson
Nothamaddor
John Saunders
Josias Woods
James manlin
Step. Martin
William Gray
Joseph Roberts
Charles Ed. etc
John Staples

David Montgomery Jr. No. 3 Street
Beverly Norwich
Samuel M. Alexander Francis Bush
David Philips
Shepard Lynde
Wm Harris
Clayton
John M. Cann
William Walton
David Montgomery Junr.
Simon Harris
Joseph Harris
George Hodgkiss
David Pryor
Lacharia Philips
John Thurmond
Tho. Eales
James Stevens

William Fairbush
George Hays
Jas. Lyon

Tho. Gunn
Ales. Miller
Wm. Fair
Wm. Oglesby
Thomas Sillery
Charles Tate
Joseph Wright
Evel. Hall
John Harper
Robert Page
William Tiller
John Shields
Margate G. Durin