

Inhabitants of Fauquier County, Petition Against Taxes to Support the Church, 1785 (page 1 of 3)

To the Honourable the General Assembly of the State of Virginia, the Petition of the undersigned Inhabitants of the said State humbly sheweth

That your Petitioners are persuaded that Religion is of the highest Moment and greatest Importance to Mankind; That its transcendent superiority in doing good exceeds all Comparison. But they are at the same time persuaded that no Taxes or Confiscations or Compulsions of any kind, have ever promoted its Glorious Cause: That the Saviour of the World and his Apostles have not directly or Indirectly any such method for the Propagation of Truth, but on the contrary by example as well as precept have proceeded in a different manner: That it has been universally allowed by Writers on the subject, that Religion flourished among the primitive Christians more than it has ever since, tho' they received no support from the Civil Powers. That the faithful Ministers of the different denominations who have a real Zeal for the welfare of Mankind, are contented with the free-will offerings of the People; and none but the Ambitious, the lazy, the luxurious Ministers who labour (if it can be called Labour) merely for Gold and not for the Good of their Fellow-creatures, have need of compulsive Measures for their support: That the State will be abundantly happier, and its Ministers more virtuous, without those Ministers who force but watch not over the Flocks than with them: That we cannot expect, after the Convulsions the State has experienced by its glorious and successful Struggle for Liberty, every thing to be Instantaneously in its most perfect State; but in the Course of Providence we doubt not that a sufficient Number of faithful Ministers will be raised, Men who seek not power and Riches, but the welfare of Mankind; That one great Advantage, among many, of the Revolution has been the Expulsion of most of those Hirelings who got into the Priest's Office merely out of Temporal Motives; And therefore, that We humbly entreat and most earnestly pray, and beseech the Honourable the Assembly that compulsive Measures may not be used for the Support of a lazy, indolent Clergy.

Citation: Petition of the Inhabitants of Fauquier County, Fauquier County, 1785, Legislative Petitions Digital Collection, Library of Virginia.

PRIMARY SOURCES FOR EDUCATORS AND STUDENTS

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(For We are conscious that faithful Ministers want no support of the kind) and consequently that no, no Assessment on account of Religion may take place:
 And your Petitioners, as in Duty bound, shall pray, &c.

Sam ^l Watson	John Wever
Thos ^l Bramble	Nathan Bramble
Wm ^l Wilson	James Weasley
John Martin	George Green
W ^l Williams	William Porter
Charles Collier	Amos Taylor
James Rouse	Ralph Hughes
Jacob Burger	James Stevenson
Daniel Whately	Lewis Jennings
Alex ^l Williamson	James Dood
Hezekiah Freeman	Harmon Prach
John Powell	Moses Tapp
Augustine Jennings	Pepe Green
Wm ^l Williams	Wm ^l Johnson
Benjamin Dood	Walter Jennings
John Nizner	Nathaniel Dood
Stephen Lee Jun ^r	Isaac Parling
Cornelius Hall	Arch ^l Fisher
Josiah Hittell	George Wheatley
John Hill	Wm ^l Herndon
Charles Witterbach	Wm ^l Suttle
Joseph Wheatley	Henry Thornberry
Wm ^l Duff	James Withers
Joseph Duncan	Elias Martin
Siinan Myge	Jacob Coone
James Duff	John Woodside
George Johnson	John McDaniel
John Stephenson	George Williams
John Green	Charles Ayres
John Green	Wm ^l Suttle
Joseph Rouse	Charles Hickson
Samuel Fisher	
John Martin	

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Samuel Johnson
William Settle
John Settle
James Hest
John Hest
Laven + Neven
Thomas Groves
Wm. Powell
Wm. Powell
Reuben Weather
Thomas Yorras
Bennet Williams
Jos. Martin
James Collins
Benjn. Hottel
Edward
Sinnar Myde
George Green
Charles Martin
John Hammer
James Wood
Robert Turner
Benjamin Knoll
George Eastman
Daniel Hitt
William Russell
Baron Hitt
Benjamin Gannas
Wm. Gibson
Martin Hill
Joseph Russell
Reuben Wright
Nicholas Wyckoff
James Batten

Faulding Turner
William Gibson
Japly Hinson
Q. B. B. B.
John Gibson
John Hitt
Benj. Hitt
William Harris
Ann Hitt
Thos. Madus
Samb. Poper
John James
Peter Kemper
Henry Kemper
Benjamin Lamb
Samuel Pettit
Benjamin Morgan
John Crockett
Alex. Sanger
John Hitt
Sol. Kemper
Martin Emwood
Thomas Pettit
John Parker
Peter Hitt
John Hitt
Humphrey Arnold
Archibald Shaw

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