

The Chief of the Department of Mines is hereby authorized to make such examinations and investigations as may enable him to report on the various systems of coal mining and all other mining practiced in the State, method of mining ventilation and machinery employed, the circumstances and responsibilities of mine accidents; and such other matters as may pertain to the general welfare of coal miners and others connected with mining, and the interests of mine owners and operators in the Commonwealth.

Examinations and investigations by the Chief.

Section 2. This act shall take effect immediately.

Act effective immediately.

APPROVED—The 18th day of July, A. D. 1957.

GEORGE M. LEADER

No. 435

AN ACT

Amending the act of May 17, 1929 (P. L. 1798), entitled "An act providing a fixed charge, payable by the Commonwealth, on lands acquired by the State and the Federal Government for forest reserves, or for the purpose of preserving and perpetuating a portion of the original forests of Pennsylvania, and preserving and maintaining the same as public places and parks; and the distribution of the same for county, school, township, and road purposes in the counties, school districts, and townships where such forests are located; and making an appropriation," changing limitations on the responsibility of the Commonwealth to pay charges to counties on certain Federal forest reserves, and making an appropriation.

The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania hereby enacts as follows:

Forest Reserves.

Section 1. Section 1, act of May 17, 1929 (P. L. 1798), entitled "An act providing a fixed charge, payable by the Commonwealth, on lands acquired by the State and the Federal Government for forest reserves, or for the purpose of preserving and perpetuating a portion of the original forests of Pennsylvania, and preserving and maintaining the same as public places and parks; and the distribution of the same for county, school, township, and road purposes in the counties, school districts, and townships where such forests are located; and making an appropriation," amended May 28, 1956 (P. L. 1759), is amended to read:

Section 1, act of May 17, 1929, P. L. 1798, amended May 28, 1956, P. L. 1759, further amended.

Section 1. Be it enacted, &c., That (a) from and after the passage of this act, all lands heretofore or hereafter acquired by the Commonwealth, or by the Government of the United States, for forest reserves or for the purpose of preserving and perpetuating any portion of the original forests of Pennsylvania and pre-

Charge on lands held by State and Federal Governments as forest reserves.

servicing and maintaining the same as public places and parks, and which, by existing laws, are now exempt from taxation, and all lands and property heretofore or hereafter acquired for the purpose of conservation of water, or to prevent flood conditions, upon which a tax is imposed by existing laws payable by the Commonwealth, shall hereafter be subject to an annual charge of five cents per acre, for the benefit of the county in which said lands are located, two and one-half cents per acre for the benefit of the schools in the respective school districts in which such lands are located, and two and one-half cents per acre for the benefit of the roads in the township where such lands are located, which charge shall be payable by the Commonwealth. (b) Except as hereinafter provided, the annual charge payable by the Commonwealth on land acquired by the Government of the United States for forest reserves is to continue only until the receipts of money by treasurers and road supervisors of the said counties and school districts and townships in which national forest reserves are located, provided for in act of April twenty-seventh, one thousand nine hundred twenty-five, Pamphlet Laws, three hundred twenty-four, shall equal or exceed the amount paid by the Commonwealth in lieu of taxes. This subsection shall not apply to the annual charge [of two and one-half cents] per acre for the benefit of the county in which the land acquired by the Government of the United States for forest reserves is located for the years one thousand nine hundred fifty-three, one thousand nine hundred fifty-four, one thousand nine hundred fifty-five, [and] one thousand nine hundred fifty-six, *and this subsection shall not apply to two and one-half cents of the annual charge per acre for the benefit of the county in which the land acquired by the Government of the United States for forest reserves is located for any year thereafter.* The charges for the benefit of the county for these years shall be paid by the Commonwealth.

Appropriation.

Section 2. The sum of twenty-two thousand five hundred dollars (\$22,500), or as much thereof as may be necessary, is hereby appropriated to the Department of Forests and Waters for the purpose of paying the increased amounts of payments as provided in section 1 of this act. The appropriation hereby made is in addition to any other appropriation made by any other act of the General Assembly.

APPROVED—The 18th day of July, A. D. 1957.

GEORGE M. LEADER