

At a General Assembly begun and holden at Philadelphia, the fourteenth day of October, A. D. 1775, and continued by adjournments until the twenty-sixth day of September, A. D. 1776, the following acts were passed:

---

CHAPTER DCCXVI.

---

AN ACT FOR THE RELIEF OF RICHARD TAYLOR, JACOB MUCK, GEORGE JACOB HAUSMAN, RICHARD RAY AND FRANCIS OWENS, LANGUISHING PRISONERS IN THE GAOL OF PHILADELPHIA COUNTY, AND JAMES MACKAY, A LANGUISHING PRISONER IN THE GAOL OF NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY, WITH RESPECT TO THE IMPRISONMENT OF THEIR PERSONS.

Whereas it has been represented to the assembly of this province by the petitions of Richard Taylor, Jacob Mucks, George Jacob Hausman, Richard Ray and Francis Owens, languishing prisoners in the gaol of Philadelphia county, and James Mackay, a languishing prisoner in the gaol of Northumberland county, that although they are willing to assign over all their respective effects to the use of their respective creditors for the payment of their respective debts and to discharge such as shall thereafter remain unpaid as soon as by their industry they can find means of satisfying such creditors, yet by their imprisonment they are disabled from putting in execution their just intentions and are reduced to great distress:

[Section I.] Be it therefore enacted by the Honorable John Penn, Esquire, Governor and Commander in Chief of the Province of Pennsylvania, by and with the consent and advice of the representatives of the freemen of the said Province in General Assembly met, and by the authority of the same, That the justices of the county court of common pleas for the county of

Philadelphia or any three of them on application to them made in writing for that purpose by the said Richard Taylor, Jacob Muck, George Jacob Hausman, Richard Ray and Francis Owens or either of them, and [that] the justices of the court of common pleas for the county of Northumberland or any three of them, shall on application for that purpose to them in writing made by the said James Mackay appoint a certain day and place for holding a special court of common pleas in their respective counties, whereof due notice shall be given to the creditor or creditors or their attorneys in fact, respectively, at whose suit they stand respectively charged, and all other his or their creditors, respectively, that can be known to the court, by leaving the same in writing at his, her or their last place of abode, at which times and places so appointed by the said courts, respectively, the said respective courts shall by an order or rule of court cause the said Richard Taylor, Jacob Muck, George Jacob Hausman, Richard Ray, Francis Owens and James Mackay, respectively, to be brought before them, and the said courts respectively, shall then and there in the presence of the said creditor or creditors, if he or they will be present, administer to the said Richard Taylor, Jacob Muck, George Jacob Hausman, Richard Ray, Francis Owens and James Mackey, respectively, an oath or affirmation according to law to the following effect, to wit:

That the account by him delivered into that honorable court in his petition to the said court doth contain a true and perfect account of all his real and personal estate, debts, credits and effects whatsoever which he or any in trust for him have or at the time of his said petition had, or is or was in any respect entitled to, in possession, remainder or reversion (except the wearing apparel and bedding for himself and family, not exceeding ten pounds in value in the whole), and that he has not at any time since his imprisonment, or before, directly or indirectly, sold, leased, assigned or otherwise disposed of or made over in trust for himself or otherwise other than is mentioned in such account any part of his lands, estate, goods, stock, money, debts or other real or personal estate whereby to have or expect any benefit or profit to himself or family or to defraud any of his creditors to whom he is indebted.

And the said Richard Taylor, Jacob Muck, George Jacob Hausman, Richard Ray, Francis Owens and James Mackay, respectively, having taken such oath or affirmation in open court and their respective creditors failing to discover any effects or estate belonging to such deponents omitted in his or their said accounts; and the said Richard Taylor, Jacob Muck, George Jacob Hausman, Richard Ray, Francis Owens and James Mackay, respectively, making an assignment to any one or more of their creditors, respectively, as the said court shall direct, in trust for all his or their said creditors of all his or their lands, goods and effects contained in such account by a short indorsement thereon, by which said assignment the estate, interest and property of the lands, goods and effects so assigned shall be vested in the person or persons to whom such assignment shall be made, who may take possession of the same in his or their own name or names; after which no release of the said Richard and Taylor, Jacob Muck, George Jacob Hausman, Richard Ray, Francis Owens and James Mackay respectively, his executors or administrators, shall be any discharge against or bar to the assignees aforesaid; then the said courts shall order the Richard Taylor, Jacob Muck, George Jacob Hausman, Richard Ray, Francis Owens and James Mackay, respectively, to be discharged from his or their imprisonment aforesaid.

[Section II.] And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That the persons of the said Richard Taylor, Jacob Muck, George Jacob Hausman, Richard Ray, Francis Owens and James Mackay, respectively, after such his or their discharge as aforesaid shall not at any time hereafter be imprisoned for any debts contracted before the time of such discharge.

Provided nevertheless, That the discharge of the said prisoners by virtue of this act shall not acquit or discharge any other person from such debt, sum or sums of money for which such person now is bound or engaged with the said prisoners, respectively, nor any lands, goods, chattels or effects which the said Richard Taylor, Jacob Muck, George Jacob Hausman, Richard Ray, Francis Owens and James Mackay, respectively, may hereafter acquire.

[Section III.] Provided also, and be it further enacted by

the authority aforesaid, That nothing in this act contained shall extend to discharge the person of the said prisoners, respectively, from imprisonment or being liable to be sued, prosecuted or imprisoned for any debt due to the Crown, and that the said debts shall be first paid by the said assignees out of the moneys, if sufficient, which shall come to their hands from the effects so assigned, nor for any debt due to any distant or absent creditor to whom notice shall not have been given pursuant to the directions of this act.

[Section IV.] Provided also, and be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That if the said Richard Taylor, Jacob Muck, George Jacob Hausman, Richard Ray, Francis Owens and James Mackay, respectively, shall upon any indictment for taking a false and corrupt oath or affirmation in any matter or thing contained in the said oath or affirmation be convicted by his or their own confession or by the verdict of twelve men, he and they shall suffer all the pains, penalties and disabilities which by law may be inflicted on persons convicted of willful and corrupt perjury, and shall likewise be liable to be arrested, taken and imprisoned upon any process *de novo* and charged in execution for the same debt in the same manner as if he or they had never been in execution or discharged before, and shall forever after be barred of any benefit of this act.

Passed November 23, 1775. Probably not submitted to the Crown for action. See Appendix XXXIII.

---

## CHAPTER DCCXVII.

---

AN ACT TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF REPRESENTATIVES IN ASSEMBLY FOR THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, AND IN THE SEVERAL COUNTIES THEREIN NAMED.

Whereas it is essential to [the] good government of every free state that all its component parts should have a just and adequate share in the legislature: