

MEMORIAL AND JOINT RESOLUTION

TO

MEMBERS OF CONGRESS,

IN

RELATION TO REGULATION

OF

COMMERCE BY RAILWAYS.

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DES MOINES:

G. W. EDWARDS, STATE PRINTER.

1872.

## MEMORIAL AND JOINT RESOLUTION

TO MEMBERS OF CONGRESS IN RELATION TO THE  
REGULATION OF COMMERCE BY RAILWAYS.

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WHEREAS, The rapid advance of the work of internal improvement has penetrated and checkered almost every portion of our country with railways, owned and controlled by large and powerful monied monopolies, thereby destroying, for all practical purposes, the possibility of individual independence in the locomotion of person and carriage of property in the old-time ways, from place to place, and making the whole public dependent on such railways for access to the markets of sister States and foreign countries, and making every citizen of the nation, from the largest producer, shipper, or manufacturer, to the smallest dealer or consumer, tributary to these great streams of commercial carriers, into whose hands are intrusted the lives, and upon whose honesty, fidelity, and impartiality in the transit of commerce is dependent the material prosperity of every citizen; and,

WHEREAS, These corporations for private profit have enjoyed the fostering care of the government, receiving large subsidies, grants of lands, the high prerogative of government—that of taking private property for public uses—has been delegated to them, and the lands and homesteads of citizens condemned to their right-of-way, on the ground that such corporations were created, their lines of railway built and operated, as works of *public utility*; and,

WHEREAS, The great power for good of these internal improvements, owned by private corporations, and operated for purposes of private profit, in the weakness of human frailty, is liable to be prostituted to purposes of private enrichment, at the expense of the rights of the great mass of the public, and thus stimulated by common

selfishness, active competition, and tempted by a door for oppression and wrong being left unclosed by law, become great powers for evil, against which no one citizen has the strength to offer successful resistance. And as these opportunities for oppression of the people along long lines of railways, often consolidated into through lines from coast to coast, passing through different States and localities, or leagued together by secret combination or conspiracy, are so numerous and difficult to detect and control by State legislation, and as to Congress has been delegated the power to regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among the several States, therefore,

*Be it Resolved*, That our Senators in Congress be instructed, and the Representatives from the State be requested, by votes and influence to assist in the speedy passage of general laws securing the lives of citizens from careless and negligent destruction in traveling in these public carriers, and securing a general uniformity impartially and in the rates of freight and passage graduated according to distance per mile, and prohibiting and punishing unjust discriminations and all violations of such laws by criminal proceedings, leading to the citizens the power of the government in self-defense in all cases of contest between them and such companies.

And that these protective measures be limited, and limited only at the point of equal justice to all, and unjust burdens upon or privileges to none, placing that control over railways which shall secure the rights of citizens from infringement the same as between man and man.

*And be it further Resolved*, That the Secretary of State be requested to transmit copies hereof to each Senator and Representative in Congress from this State.

# REPORT

OF THE

## HOUSE COMMITTEE

OF THE

### FOURTEENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

ON HOUSE FILE No. 1.



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