

Feb. 26, 1853.

CHAP. LXXXI.— *An Act to prevent Frauds upon the Treasury of the United States.*

Transfers of claims on United States, how and when legal.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,* That all transfers and assignments hereafter made of any claim upon the United States, or any part or share thereof, or interest therein, whether absolute or conditional, and whatever may be the consideration therefor, and all powers of attorney, orders, or other authorities for receiving payment of any such claim, or any part or share thereof, shall be absolutely null and void, unless the same shall be freely made and executed in the presence of at least two attesting witnesses, after the allowance of such claim, the ascertainment of the amount due, and the issuing of a warrant for the payment thereof.

Officers, &c., forbidden to be interested in claims, or act for claimants.

SEC. 2. *And be it further enacted,* That any officer of the United States, or person holding any place of trust or profit, or discharging any official function under, or in connection with, any executive department of the Government of the United States, or under the Senate or House of Representatives of the United States, who, after the passage of this act, shall act as an agent or attorney for prosecuting any claim against the United States, or shall in any manner, or by any means, otherwise than in the discharge of his proper official duties, aid or assist in the prosecution or support of any such claim or claims, or shall receive any gratuity, or any share of or interest in any claim from any claimant against the United States, with intent to aid or assist, or in consideration of having aided or assisted, in the prosecution of such claim, shall be liable to indictment, as for a misdemeanor, in any court of the United States having jurisdiction thereof, and, on conviction, shall pay a fine not exceeding five thousand dollars, or suffer imprisonment in the penitentiary not exceeding one year, or both, as the court in its discretion shall adjudge.

Penalty.

Members of Congress also forbidden.

SEC. 3. *And be it further enacted,* That any Senator or Representative in Congress who, after the passage of this act, shall, for compensation paid or to be paid, certain or contingent, act as agent or attorney for prosecuting any claim or claims against the United States, or shall in any manner or by any means for such compensation aid or assist in the prosecution or support of any such claim or claims, or shall receive any gratuity, or any share of or interest in any claim from any claimant against the United States, with intent to aid or assist, or in consideration of having aided or assisted in the prosecution of such claim, shall be liable to indictment as for a misdemeanor in any court of the United States having jurisdiction thereof, and, on conviction, shall pay a fine not exceeding five thousand dollars, or suffer imprisonment in the penitentiary not exceeding one year, or both, as the court in its discretion shall adjudge.

Penalty.

Penalty for destroying, &c., records, &c.

SEC. 4. *And be it further enacted,* That any person who shall wilfully and knowingly destroy, or attempt to destroy, or with intent to steal or destroy, shall take and carry away any record, paper, or proceeding of a court of justice, filed or deposited with any clerk or officer of such court, or any paper or document or record filed or deposited in any public office, or with any judicial or public officer, shall, without reference to the value of the record, paper, document, or proceeding, so taken, be deemed guilty of felony, and on conviction in any court of the United States having jurisdiction thereof, shall pay a fine not exceeding two thousand dollars, or suffer imprisonment in a penitentiary not exceeding three years, or both, as the court in its discretion shall adjudge.

Same subject.

SEC. 5. *And be it further enacted,* That any officer having the custody of any record, document, paper, or proceeding specified in the last preceding section of this act, who shall fraudulently take away, or withdraw, or destroy any such record, document, paper, or proceeding filed in his office or deposited with him, or in his custody, shall be deemed guilty of

felony, and on conviction in any court of the United States having jurisdiction thereof, shall pay a fine not exceeding two thousand dollars, or suffer imprisonment in a penitentiary not exceeding three years, or both, as the court in its discretion shall adjudge, and shall forfeit his office and be forever afterwards disqualified from holding any office under the Government of the United States.

SEC. 6. *And be it further enacted*, That if any person or persons shall, directly or indirectly, promise, offer, or give, or cause or procure to be promised, offered, or given, any money, goods, right in action, bribe, present, or reward, or any promise, contract, undertaking, obligation, or security for the payment or delivery of any money, goods, right in action, bribe, present, or reward, or any other valuable thing whatever, to any member of the Senate or House of Representatives of the United States, after his election as such member, and either before or after he shall have qualified and taken his seat, or to any officer of the United States, or person holding any place of trust or profit, or discharging any official function under, or in connection with, any department of the Government of the United States, or under the Senate or House of Representatives of the United States, after the passage of this act, with intent to influence his vote or decision on any question, matter, cause, or proceeding which may then be pending, or may by law, or under the Constitution of the United States, be brought before him in his official capacity, or in his place of trust or profit, and shall be thereof convicted, such person or persons so offering, promising, or giving, or causing or procuring to be promised, offered, or given any such money, goods, right in action, bribe, present, or reward, or any promise, contract, undertaking, obligation, or security for the payment or delivery of any money, goods, right in action, bribe, present, or reward, or other valuable thing whatever, and the member, officer, or person who shall in anywise accept or receive the same, or any part thereof, shall be liable to indictment as for a high crime and misdemeanor in any court of the United States having jurisdiction for the trial of crimes and misdemeanors; and shall, upon conviction thereof, be fined not exceeding three times the amount so offered, promised, or given, and imprisoned in a penitentiary not exceeding three years; and the person convicted of so accepting or receiving the same, or any part thereof, if an officer or person holding any such place of trust or profit as aforesaid, shall forfeit his office or place; and any person so convicted under this section shall forever be disqualified to hold any office of honor, trust, or profit, under the United States.

Penalty for bribery, or undue influencing, of members of Congress.

SEC. 7. *And be it further enacted*, That the provisions of this act, and of the act of July twenty-ninth, eighteen hundred and forty-six, entitled "An act in relation to the payment of claims," shall apply and extend to all claims against the United States, whether allowed by special acts of Congress, or arising under general laws or treaties, or in any other manner whatever.

Extent of this act and act of 1846, ch. 66.

SEC. 8. *And be it further enacted*, That nothing in the second and third sections of this act contained shall be construed to apply to the prosecution or defence of any action or suit in any judicial court of the United States.

Sections 2 and 3 not to apply to suits in court.

APPROVED, February 26, 1853.

CHAP. LXXXII.—*An Act to regulate the terms of the District Court of the United States for the District of Iowa.*

Feb. 26, 1853.

1849, ch. 124.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled*, That instead of three terms annually of the District Court of the United States for the District of Iowa, as now prescribed by law, there shall hereafter be held annually six terms

Terms of district court in Iowa.