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Memorial of the Legislature of Missouri, relative to the extension of the southwestern boundary of the state, and the extinguishment of the Indian title to certain lands

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SOUTHWESTERN BOUNDARY AND INDIAN TITLE.

MEMORIAL
OF
THE LEGISLATURE OF MISSOURI,

RELATIVE

To the extension of the southwestern boundary of the State, and the extinguishment of the Indian title to certain lands.

FEBRUARY 25, 1850.

Referred to the Committee on Public Lands, and ordered to be printed.

MEMORIAL to Congress asking an extension of the southwestern boundary of Missouri, and the extinguishment of the Indian title to certain lands.

Your memorialists, the General Assembly of the State of Missouri, respectfully represent to your honorable body, that there is a tract of country, not large, but exceedingly fertile, adjoining the southwestern border of this State; at present inhabited by the Seneca and Quapaw Indians, and which, from its peculiar position, should belong to this State. A large navigable river flows through it, and forms the only natural outlet to market for the citizens of that portion of Missouri; and from the fact that it flows exclusively through the Indian country, it affords but few advantages to them. The country is well watered, and abounds in rich prairies and river bottoms, contains immense deposits of bituminous coal, and fine quarries of marble; its acquisition would be of incalculable value to the State. The mouth of Spring river, about five miles west of our present boundary, is an excellent point for a town, and in fact the only point where a good shipping place can be had. Should this country be attached to Missouri, its many and important advantages would be felt—a city would soon be built up where a wilderness now stands, the produce of the southwest would find a ready outlet, and a quick return of the proceeds; it would also furnish many conveniencies to the general government in the transportation of troops and munitions of war, and would contribute much to aid our frontier service. The Indians would be willing to cede this important tract of land for a reasonable compensation; and if it was ceded, the Neosho or Grand river would at once become a stream of great value, and would give an outlet for the surplus produce of a large tract of country. In view of these important advantages, we desire your honorable body to authorize this State to extend her boundary, (provided the Indian title can be extinguished,) in the manner following, to wit:

To commence at the southwest corner of the State, and run due west to the Neosho or Grand river; thence up said stream to the junction of Neosho with Spring river; thence up the Neosho river twenty-five miles to the north boundary of the Quapaw lands; thence due east to the present State line, distant about twenty-five miles. We also further ask, that a commissioner or commissioners be appointed to treat with the Indian tribes inhabiting said tract of country, on the part of the general government, or give the State of Missouri the power to treat with said Indians, and purchase the country, in accordance with powers heretofore delegated to the State of New York, on that subject.

Resolved, That the secretary of state be required to furnish each of the senators and representatives in Congress from this State with a copy of the above memorial.

Approved March 10, 1849.