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Additional land district in Oregon

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ADDITIONAL LAND DISTRICT IN OREGON.

JANUARY 31, 1888.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union and ordered to be printed.

Mr. HERMANN, from the Committee on Public Lands, submitted the following

REPORT:

[To accompany bill H. R. 1762.]

The Committee on Public Lands, to whom was referred H. R. 1762, beg leave to report that they have carefully examined the facts necessitating the establishment of an additional land district in the State of Oregon; and find that—

Oregon embraces a land area of 60,975,360 acres, or greater than New York and Pennsylvania combined.

About two-thirds are now fully surveyed and capable of settlement and the remainder is arable, grazing, and timber lands.

The present land districts in that State are all very large and each contributes an excess over the maximum land business, and yields to its officers the maximum salaries and commissions allowed by law.

The proposed new district is located in eastern Oregon; until in late years in the occupancy of Indian tribes, and the necessity for the present establishment is occasioned by the rapid settlements which are induced there by the large area of vacant agricultural lands subject to Homestead and pre-emption.

The proposed boundaries embrace about 9,308,160 acres, and are 150 miles distant from the east to the west, and 102 miles from north to south. The nearest land offices at present by the usually traveled route to the settlers in the center of the new district are Lakeview, distant 160 miles, and La Grande 180 miles; and the communication is only by wagon roads. These great distances impose much cost and inconvenience to every settler who makes a home on the public domain, and greatly retards the growth and development of the country. The creation of this district will reduce the three districts from which it is taken, bringing their outer boundaries within easier access to the local officers, while not disturbing their present earnings much, if any, below the maximum limited by law. The least district in area of those from which the new district is taken will still be in excess of 8,000,000 acres.

This committee reported the necessity for this new district in the last session of the Forty-ninth Congress, and the Senate passed a bill similar to the present, but it failed to pass the House for want of consideration. The Department then and now recommends the establishment of this additional district, the Commissioner of the General Land Office

reporting to the committee that, "it will serve the convenience of a great number of settlers, and be in the interest of the public service," and therefore is approved.

We accordingly report said bill back to the House with the recommendation that it do pass, with the following amendment: Substitute the word "four" in line 13, page 1, for the word "three"; and by striking out in line 14 the words "on said parallel line."