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Omaha Indian Reservation, Nebr

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H.R. Rep. No. 564, 50th Cong., 1st Sess. (1888)

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OMAHA INDIAN RESERVATION, NEBR.

FEBRUARY 21, 1888.—Referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

Mr. MCSHANE, from the Committee on Indian Affairs, submitted the following

REPORT:

[To accompany bill H. R. 4988.]

The Committee on Indian Affairs, to whom was referred the bill (H. R. 4988) authorizing and directing the Secretary of the Interior to extend the time of payment of the purchase money on the sale of the reservation of the Omaha tribe of Indians in the State of Nebraska, after having carefully considered the provisions of the bill, and the necessity for the proposed legislation, recommended the passage of the bill.

The reservation was sold to actual settlers during the years 1884 and 1885 in quantities not exceeding 160 acres to any individual, and was made payable in three installments, one-third being paid within one year from date of settlement. The law provides that when the money is paid into the United States Treasury the Indians are to receive 5 per cent. interest on the same, which amount is to be expended annually for the use of the Indians. The land was appraised and brought its full value, and by reason of improvements is an absolutely safe security for the money. It was two years before the settlers could realize from the cultivation of the land, and the very low price now paid for agricultural products, and there being no power to mortgage the land because of the title being in the Government, settlers would be required to sacrifice the land unless given an opportunity to save the same by an extension of time to make payments.

The passage of this bill would be an act of justice to the settlers and save the Government from paying the interest which would be paid by the settlers during the extension, while the Indians would lose nothing. There can be no reasonable objection to the passage of the bill.