To the Hon. the Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, in General Court assembled.

Respectfully represent the County Commissioners of Dukes County, that there are, in said County, as appears by the report of Hon. John Milton Earle, Senate Document, No. 96, of the year 1861, upwards of three hundred Indians and people of color, composing what are known as the Chappaquiddick, Christianstown, Deep Bottom, and Gay Head tribes; all of whom are recognized as the "special and involuntary wards of the state," but are not citizens of either of the towns in said Dukes County, neither are they included in the census taken, decennially, by order of Congress. They further represent that the costs of criminal prosecutions, formerly borne in part by the Commonwealth, but now wholly by the County, are greatly increased by the presence therein of this class of people; the books of the jails showing that, during the past ten years, eighty five per cent of the imprisonments for crime in the jail and House of Correction are of people of color. Your petitioners, therefore, ask that provision may be made whereby the Commonwealth shall bear a just proportion of the costs arising from this source; and, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

Benjamin Davis
Chairman of County Commissioners
Edgartown, Feb. 1862.

[verso:

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Petition of
71 Benjamin Davis
Chairman of Co. Commissioners
of Dukes County,
asking that provision be made whereby the Commonwealth shall bear a just proportion of the costs arising from criminal prosecutions of the Indians in that County.

Presented by
Edgar Marchant,
of Edgartown.

Refer to Com. on the
Ho. of Rep.
Feb. 14, 1862.
   Referred to the Com. on
the Judiciary
   W.S. Robinson
   Clerk