

# Congress and Human Trafficking in 1812

---

## Document 4.

- A. Excerpt from draft legislation regarding the transportation of enslaved and free persons of color, 1812; Records of the U.S. House of Representatives, National Archives

That the owner or owners – his or their agent or agents – when shipping coastwise any of the persons described by them ... shall furnish the captain, master or the commander of any ship or vessel of 40 tons or more with a certificate signed by a Judge or Justice of a court of record certifying – in his hand and seal – that the person or persons so to be transported according to the provisions of the said section is or are the property of the person or persons transporting the same – and if the person or persons to be transported coastwise be only bound to service – the terms of such service to be set forth in the said certificate. . . .

And if the captain, master or commander of any ship or vessel as aforesaid shall fail to comply with the injunction of the act ... the ship or vessel in like manner shall be forfeited. . . .

- B. Excerpt from the Report of the Select Committee considering the Memorial of the Society of Friends, January 9, 1812; Records of the U.S. Senate, National Archives.

The Committee to whom was referred The Memorial of the Society of Friends suggesting the inadequacy of the present laws to restrain the improper transportation of free people of color from the middle to the Southern States, and praying some provisions to remedy these defects –

Reports that in their opinion Congress have [*sic*] not the Constitutional powers to pass any such law to carry into effect the object of the Memorialists and that the petitioners have leave to withdraw their Memorial.