

RESOLUTIONS

OF

THE LEGISLATURE OF MASSACHUSETTS,

RELATIVE TO

The recent assault upon the Hon. Mr. Sumner.

JUNE 11, 1856.—Ordered to lie on the table.

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS.

IN THE YEAR ONE THOUSAND EIGHT HUNDRED AND FIFTY-SIX.

RESOLVES concerning the recent assault upon the honorable Charles Sumner at Washington.

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, That we have received, with deep concern, information of the recent violent assault committed in the Senate chamber at Washington upon the person of the honorable Charles Sumner, one of our senators in Congress, by Preston S. Brooks, a member of the House of Representatives from South Carolina, an assault which no provocation could justify—brutal and cowardly in itself—a gross breach of parliamentary privilege—a ruthless attack upon the liberty of speech—an outrage of the decencies of civilized life, and an indignity to the commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Resolved, That the legislature of Massachusetts, in the name of her free and enlightened people, demands for her representatives in the national legislature entire *freedom of speech*, and will uphold them in the proper exercise of that essential right of American citizens.

Resolved, That we approve of Mr. Sumner's manliness and courage in his earnest and fearless declaration of free principles, and his defence of human rights and free territory.

Resolved, That the legislature of Massachusetts is imperatively called upon by the plainest dictates of duty, from a decent regard to the rights of her citizens, and respect for her character as a sovereign State, to demand, and the legislature of Massachusetts hereby does demand, of the national Congress, a prompt and strict investigation into the recent assault upon Senator Sumner, and the expulsion by the House of Representatives of Mr. Brooks, of South Carolina, and any other member concerned with him in said assault.

Resolved, That his excellency the governor be requested to transmit a copy of the foregoing resolves to the President of the Senate and Speaker of the House of Representatives, and to each of the senators and members of the House of Representatives from this commonwealth in the Congress of the United States.

Passed House of Representatives, May 29, 1856.

CHARLES A. PHELPS, *Speaker*.

Passed Senate, May 30, 1856.

ELIHU C. BAKER, *President*.

Approved, May 31, 1856.

HENRY J. GARDNER.

SECRETARY'S OFFICE, BOSTON, May 31, 1856.

I certify the foregoing to be a true copy of the original resolves.

Attest:

FRANCIS DE WITT,
Secretary of the Commonwealth.