

INDIAN AGENTS.

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L E T T E R

FROM

THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR,

TRANSMITTING,

*With a letter from the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, a draught and recommending the passage of a bill to authorize the accounting officers of the Treasury to allow certain credits in the settlement of accounts of Indian agents.*

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FEBRUARY 9, 1888.—Referred to the Committee on Indian Affairs and ordered to be printed.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,  
*Washington, February 7, 1888.*

SIR: There is transmitted herewith, for the consideration of the proper committee, a draught of a bill, with an explanatory letter of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, dated 3d instant—

To authorize the accounting officers of the Treasury Department to allow credits in the settlement of the accounts of Indian agents.

Very respectfully,

WM. F. VILAS,  
*Secretary.*

The SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

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SIR: I have the honor to report that the appointment of Mr. M. W. Stevens to be agent for the Indians of the Mackinac Agency in Michigan, made during the recess of the United States Senate, in 1885, was confirmed August 2, 1886; and he executed a new bond under said confirmation, dated 24th of that month, on which date he also took the oath of office, Congress in the mean time having adjourned August 5, 1886. Notwithstanding the fact that Mr. Stevens continued to faithfully discharge the duties and remained under the responsibilities of agent for Mackinac Agency during the interim between the adjournment of Congress and the date of his new bond and oath of office, the accounting officers of the Treasury Department refused to allow him pay as agent from August 6 to August 23, inclusive, 1886, and on the honorable Sec-  
quid Auditor's suggestion, this office recommended and the Department

authorized under date of 25th November last, that Stevens be appointed farmer in charge of Mackinac Agency from August 6 to August 23, 1886, both dates inclusive, at a rate of compensation of \$1,000 per annum, the same as his pay as agent, and he was so appointed, but the honorable Second Comptroller refuses to allow him credit for said compensation in the settlement of his accounts, on the ground that as Agent Stevens' service terminated when Congress adjourned and did not recommence until the date of his new bond and oath of office, and he not in the mean time having been appointed farmer in charge, his services during that time were purely voluntary, to accept or recognize which is forbidden by law see act of May 1, 1884 (23 Stats., 17).

Another case, almost similar to the foregoing, is that of Agent Bartholomew Coffey, of the Umatilla Agency in Oregon, who having been appointed November 24, 1885, during a recess of the Senate, but failing of confirmation during the next session of the Senate, ceased to be agent on its adjournment August 5, 1886.

Subsequently, on August 9, 1886, Agent Coffey was reappointed, under which last appointment he filed an official bond dated August 27, 1886, on which day he also took the oath of office, but the accounting officers of the Treasury Department refused to allow him credit as agent for pay during the interval between August 5 and August 27, 1886, and on the suggestion of the honorable Second Auditor this office recommended, and the Department, under date of July 7, 1887, authorized, the appointment of Mr. Coffey as farmer, in charge of the Umatilla Agency, to cover this time, at a rate of compensation of \$1,200 per annum, the same as he was to receive as agent, and he was so appointed; but the honorable Second Comptroller still refuses to allow him credit in the settlement of his accounts for his pay as such farmer in charge on the same grounds that his refusal to allow Mr. Stevens, viz, that his services to the Government terminated the day the Senate adjourned and did not again commence until the filing of his bond and his taking the oath of office under his subsequent appointment as agent; notwithstanding it is not denied that he rendered faithful service and remained under responsibility during this time.

In view of these facts, I respectfully recommend that the necessary steps be taken to obtain relief for Agents Stevens and Coffey from Congress, as it would be in the nature of a hardship to them to lose pay for any part of their service through no fault of their own; and for this purpose I submit herewith a draught of a bill to be submitted to Congress to authorize the accounting officers of the Treasury Department to allow to Agent M. W. Stevens credit for \$48.91, pay as farmer in charge for eighteen days, viz, from August 6 to 23, 1886, both dates inclusive, at \$1,000 per annum, and Agent Bartholomew Coffey credit for \$68.47, pay as farmer in charge for twenty-one days, viz, from August 6 to August 26, 1886, both dates inclusive, at \$1,200 per annum, in the settlement of their several accounts.

Very respectfully,

J. D. C. ATKINS,  
*Commissioner.*

The SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY.

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A BILL to authorize the accounting officers of the Treasury Department to allow certain credits in the settlement of the accounts of Indian agents.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the accounting officers of the Treasury Department are hereby authorized and directed to allow credit in the settlement of the accounts*

of Mark W. Stevens, United States Indian agent for the Indians of the Mackinac Agency in Michigan, for pay for his services as farmer in charge from August 6, 1886, the day immediately succeeding that on which his services terminated under his *ad interim* appointment, until August 23, 1886, the day immediately preceding that on which his service under his present appointment commenced, both dates inclusive, amounting to \$48.91, and to allow credit to Bartholomew Coffey, agent for the Indians of the Umatilla Agency in Oregon, in the settlement of his accounts, for his pay as farmer in charge, from August 6, 1886, the day immediately succeeding that on which Congress adjourned, to August 26, the day immediately preceding that on which his service under his subsequent appointment as agent commenced, both dates inclusive, amounting to \$68.47.

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