

TERM OF OFFICE OF INDIAN INSPECTORS AND INDIAN
AGENTS.

M E S S A G E

FROM THE

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,

TRANSMITTING

*A communication from the Secretary of the Interior relative to the term of
office of Indian inspectors and Indian agents.*

MARCH 30, 1882.—Referred to the Committee on Indians Affairs and ordered to be
printed.

To the Senate and House of Representatives :

I transmit herewith a letter from the Secretary of the Interior, inclosing draft of a bill to amend section 2056 of the Revised Statutes of the United States, relating to the term of office of Indian inspectors and Indian agents.

The subject is commended to the consideration of Congress.

CHESTER A ARTHUR.

EXECUTIVE MANSION,
March 30, 1882.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
Washington, March 29, 1882.

SIR : I have the honor to inclose herewith the draft of an amendment to section 2056, Revised Statutes United States, relating to the term of office of Indian inspectors and Indian agents.

That section now reads as follows :

“SEC. 2056. Each Indian agent shall hold his office for the term of four years.”

The term of office of an Indian agent therefore expires absolutely, and he ceases to be an officer of the department, at the expiration of the term for which he was appointed.

It frequently happens that the term of an agent expires before his successor can be appointed and qualified. In the mean time there is no responsible officer at the agency, and the late agent, although in charge of the agency and of all the public property there, can do no official act

or be bound by department instructions. The want of a provision of law adequate to such cases has long been felt in the Indian service, and the good results of such an enactment are constantly demonstrated in the cases of surveyors-general, registers of land offices, receivers of public moneys, and pension agents, concerning whom the Revised Statutes have provided in terms similar or equivalent to the provisions of the amendment to section 2056 herein proposed.

It is highly desirable that Indian inspectors shall be placed on the same footing as agents, so that an inspector may not cease to be an officer in the midst of an investigation, but may hold his office, as it is proposed that Indian agents may, after the expiration of his commission, and continue in the uninterrupted discharge of his duties until reappointed or relieved by his successor.

I have the honor to recommend the subject to the favorable attention of Congress.

I have the honor to be, sir, with great respect, your obedient servant,
S. J. KIRKWOOD,

Secretary.

The PRESIDENT.

A BILL to amend section 2056 of the Revised Statutes of the United States.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That section 2056 of the Revised Statutes of the United States is hereby amended so as to read as follows: Each Indian inspector and Indian agent shall hold his office for the term of four years and until his successor shall be duly appointed and qualified and shall enter upon the duties of his office; and the existing official bond of any officer so acting shall be deemed good and sufficient and in force until the date of the approval of a new bond to be given by him, if recommissioned, or until relieved by his successor, for the additional time he may continue to act pursuant to the authority of this section.