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LAND DISTRICTS IN DAKOTA.

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FEBRUARY 24, 1886.—Referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

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Mr. STRAIT, from the Committee on Public Lands, submitted the following

R E P O R T :

[To accompany bill H. R. 2823.]

*The Committee on Public Lands, to which was referred the bill (H. R. 2823) to create two additional land districts in Dakota and to define the boundaries of the Deadwood district, submits the following report thereon:*

The purpose of this bill is to create additional land districts, the better to facilitate public business.

Under the provisions of a bill now pending in this body, a large tract of land, now embraced in the great reservation of the Sioux Indians, will be added to the public domain, and this land will be eagerly sought for homestead purposes. The great body of this land which will be added to the public domain is so situated that it is too far removed from existing land offices to make it desirable, either from principles of economy or convenience, that it should be annexed to existing districts.

That portion of the ceded lands (under Senate bill No. 52, now pending) which lies west of the one hundred and second meridian of longitude west from Greenwich, is sufficiently convenient to the Deadwood land office to make it advisable to annex it thereto; but that portion of the ceded lands (being now a portion of the Sioux Indian Reservation) lying east of said one hundred and second meridian is so far removed from any existing land office that it would be a positive hardship to a worthy and enterprising class of pioneers to annex said lands to any existing district now in operation. The Forty-seventh Congress created two land districts in this Territory, contingent upon the opening to settlement of said land, but the boundaries fixed in said legislation are not compatible with the convenience and best interests of the public; and this legislation is therefore recommended to change said boundaries, the better to accommodate the settlers on said public domain.

Said ceded lands east of the one hundred and second meridian are separated from north to south for a considerable distance by permanent Indian reservations, making it essential that two districts be created, even were not the area sufficient for two large districts, as is the case.

This bill also provides for annexing portions of districts already established to the proposed districts, for the purpose of facilitating business and relieving said old districts, now overburdened.

The proposed districts embrace a considerable area within their limits that will still remain reservations for Indians, but the proposed law for

the allotment of lands in severalty to the Indians, and their advancing civilization, will make it necessary that said reservations be surveyed and plats thereof kept on file at convenient locations, as in the case of the public domain, and advisable that all reservations should be within the limits of land districts.

Under section 4 this bill is not operative until the proposed treaty with the Indians has been duly ratified.

The committee therefore recommends the passage of the bill.

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