

Section 2. The land shall not be acquired until its title has been approved by the Department of Justice.

Title to be approved by Department of Justice.

Section 3. The sum of nineteen thousand dollars (\$19,000), or as much thereof as is necessary, is hereby appropriated to the Department of Property and Supplies for the payment of the purchase price and incidental expenses, including the completion of an abstract of title.

Appropriation.

APPROVED—The 31st day of May, A. D. 1956.

GEORGE M. LEADER

No. 646

AN ACT

Authorizing the appointment of a joint committee of the House and Senate under the Joint State Government Commission for the *purpose of making a study and investigation and legislative recommendations relating to subsidence of surface soil in anthracite and bituminous coal mining regions and the damages occurring as a result of such subsidence; conferring powers and imposing duties on the Committee and the Commission, and making an appropriation to the Joint State Government Commission.

The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania hereby enacts as follows:

Section 1. There is hereby created, under the Joint State Government Commission, a joint committee to be known as the Subsidence Committee which shall consist of five members of the House of Representatives, who shall be appointed by the Speaker of the House, and five members of the Senate, who shall be appointed by the President pro tempore of the Senate. The Committee shall elect a chairman. The members of the Committee shall serve without compensation, but shall be reimbursed for all expenses incurred in the discharge of their duties. If a vacancy occurs in the membership of the Committee during its existence, the vacancy shall be filled in the same manner as the member whose place is vacated.

Creation of Subsidence Committee, under the Joint State Government Commission.

Section 2. During the interim between the present and next succeeding biennial session of the General Assembly, it shall be the duty of the Committee to make a complete study and investigation in the anthracite and bituminous coal mining regions of the circumstances,

Duty of study and investigation of subsidence of surface soil due to coal mining operations.

* "purchase" in original.

causes and remedies relating to the subsidence of the surface soil due to coal mining operations, including any damages which have occurred or may occur to any privately owned property or school, church or public highway situated thereon.

Powers of Committee.

Section 3. The Committee shall have the power to hold hearings and take testimony. It may issue subpoenas, under the hand and seal of its chairman, commanding any person to appear before it and to answer questions touching matters properly being inquired into by the Committee and to produce such books, papers, records and documents as the Committee deems necessary. Any person who wilfully neglects or refuses to testify before this Committee or to produce any books, papers, records or documents shall be subject to the penalties provided by the laws of the Commonwealth in such cases. Each member of the Committee shall have the power to administer oaths and affirmations to witnesses appearing before the Committee.

Report of Committee to Joint State Government Commission and thence to the General Assembly.

Section 4. The Subsidence Committee shall report its findings and recommendations to the Joint State Government Commission and the Commission shall transmit the findings and recommendations of the Committee to the General Assembly on or before March 1, 1957, together with such proposed legislation as the Committee deems necessary to carry its recommendations into effect.

Appropriation.

Section 5. The sum of five thousand dollars (\$5000), or as much thereof as is necessary, is specifically appropriated to the Joint State Government Commission for the payment of expenses of the members of said Subsidence Committee for the preparation, editing, printing and distribution of the report and for any other expenses deemed necessary and proper by the Commission.

Manner of payment.

Section 6. The sum appropriated shall be paid on warrant of the Auditor General in favor of the chairman of the Commission on the presentation of his requisition for the same.

Act effective immediately.

Section 7. This act shall take effect immediately.

APPROVED—The 31st day of May, A. D. 1956.

GEORGE M. LEADER