

Connecticut State Library, Record Group 2
Rejected Bills of Native Americans
Merged 1856 and [1857] petitions

Petition of the Pequot Indians (Ledyard) For Restoration of Lands

To the Honorable General Assembly of the State of Connecticut to be in session at New Haven in Said State

The humble Petition of the Pequot Tribe of Indians now residing on the reservation of said Tribe in the town of Ledyard and County of New London and State of Connecticut, Whose names are undersigned on behalf of themselves and others belonging to said Tribe, humbly Showeth That we the Pequots as aforesaid again approach the Legislature with a statement of the grievances under which we labour and of which we most respectfully but at the same time most firmly solicit the effectual redress of Our wrongs, so notorious and so numerous that their minute Detail is quite unnecessary and would indeed be impossible were it deemed expedient to place them within this little space.

Ages of persecutions on one hand and of patience on the other Sufficiently attest our suffering to an enlightened world. Privations have been answered only by petition, indignities by remonstrance, injuries by forgiveness, [But] it has been [at least a Great] misfortune [to us] to have suffered by the act of the legislature last year; and for the sake of our deplorable state and immorality and privations Which causes was not presented before that Honorable body to be compared in their Consideration with reality by those who presented an account or Petition to the legislature last year at Hartford for a grant to empower the State to sell our land without our consent to preserve our property as they call it. [In 1855, an act which we knew nothing about, an act which we never gave any word towards framing, neither was we ever asked to sign a Petition for the sale of our land, neither were we ever notified to appear at the Legislature or speak for ourselves and tell out grievances and wants and defend our own rights which has always been our privilege before].

[An act that was supposed to be intended for our benefit and for the preservation of our land and property, as it is titled, an act which was supposed to be passed for the detraction of our Deplorable state of

immorality and privations. But that act, instead of performing that benevolent office which it was intended to fill, has proved to be through the misrepresentation of some person, the Deadless [Debtless?] foe to our name under the pretense of giving it assistance while in fact it has double riveted our chains of bondage anew and sunk us lower in Degradation and corrupted our mind more with immorality, and buried us Deeper in privations than ever, those very persons which misrepresented our people to the Legislature in 1855 are the very persons who claim that act to support them in gorging their ravenous and brutal rapine amid the memorials of our last infirmity. We have suffered, we have been bereaved of our native land, we have been torn from the breast of our mother Country which has nursed our generations for many a century, yet notwithstanding all this, our bosom treasures has been torn from our arms without our consent and our bread has been torn from our mouths without any Justification what ever; and we ourselves Differing to a greater number then was presented to the Legislature in the year 1855, a number amounting to 30 or 40, the greater part of which are to be Driven off from their native land and fenced up in one corner of their reservation like a horde of vermin upon a little piece of land not Exceeding two hundred acres, there to perish without bread or water in a den of red snakes.

Is this consistent, is it just to make our present State more Deplorable and our condition more helpless by baring upon every avenue to landable ambition, by] denouncing industry and battering every energy for [personal interest or public] improvement which might perhaps bring about better days of civilization (this as the case) and [which seems to be the slight pretext upon which our antagonists rested to do all they have done and now] what have we done in these later years [that has passed but never to be forgotten when your eastern shores was invaded by a ruthless foe when the highest energies of your bravest men were called forth to shield your country's virtues from that impending storm of destruction? Then, in that dark day, your noble patriots found us sustaining] the power which man spurns us; we have served the arm which has smote us; we have lavished our strength, our talent, and our treasures; [and the noblest blood of Heroism in these dark days of years that have passed but always to be remembered] we have done more [which is to be prized above everything else in this world], we have sacrificed upon the alter of our bounty to you hundreds of acres of land to secure to ourselves a little permanent reservation. What else have [we] done? We have helped Bury[?] up on the prodigal effusions of your blood the triumphant Ark of the united states Liberty and independence

we then approach with confidence an enlightened Legislature in the name of nature we ask our rights as men in the name of the constitution of the united states we ask the possession of our land again and privilege to enjoy it as we have done before in the name of that power which overrules all things, we ask the sacred protection the state as she has done before in securing and confirming to us our whole reservation by permanent bounds. Then in behalf of ourselves and others belonging to the Pequot Tribe we call upon this Legislature to annihilate the odious bondage which bows down the mental, physical, and moral energies of our Tribe and people. Then in the name of humanity which breath charity, [?] all we again ask the free use of our whole reservation as before. May it therefore please this Honorable House to take into consideration our humble request and abolish and repeal that Disabling act of last year which in a great measure infringes upon our natural rights and liberty~ we ask it in name of your authority, and protection And your Petitioners will ever pray

Dated at Pequot Indian ^{town} April 21st 1856 = Ledyard
their marks

Hannah x Fagans	Betsey x Wheeler
Nancey x Fagans	George W Cottrell
Peter x George	Salame x Lawrance
Rody x Cottrell	Claricey x Lawrance
Mark D Babcock	Persilia x Lawrance
Sally x Babcock	Amasa x Lawrance
Harriet x W George	Sarah x Congdon
Charle Henry Babcak	Ellin x Congdon
Caroline x Wheeler	lewis x Congdon
Jane G x Wheeler	Samual x Congdon
Mary Ann x Sears	
Edward x Sears	