

**§17. Acquisition of land by United States where owner disabled or unwilling; proceedings**

Whenever, upon application of an authorized agent of the United States, it is made to appear to the Superior Court that the United States desires to purchase a tract of land and the right of way thereto, within the State, for the erection of a lighthouse, beacon light, range light or light keeper's dwelling, forts, batteries or other public buildings, and that any owner is a minor, or is mentally ill, or is from any cause incapable of making perfect title to said lands, or is unknown, or a nonresident, or from disagreement in price or any other cause refuses to convey such land to the United States, said court shall order notice of said application to be published in some newspaper in the county where such land lies, if any, otherwise in a paper in this State nearest to said land, once a week for 3 weeks, which notice shall contain an accurate description of said land, with the names of the supposed owners, provable in the manner required for publications of notice in Title 14, and shall require all persons interested in said land on a day specified in said notice to file their objections to the proposed purchase. At the time so specified said court shall empanel a jury, in the manner provided for the trial of civil actions, to assess the value of said land at its fair market value and all damages sustained by the owner of such land by reason of such appropriation. Such amount when so assessed, with the entire costs of said proceedings, shall be paid into the treasury of said county, and thereupon the sheriff thereof, upon the production of the certificate of the treasurer that said amount has been paid, shall execute to the United States and deliver to its agent a deed of said land, reciting the proceedings in said cause, which deed shall convey to the United States a good and absolute title to said land against all persons. The money paid into such county treasury shall there remain until ordered to be paid out by a court of competent jurisdiction.

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