

To this End we humbly Propose, that the Merchants be no longer solely trusted with the keeping of Tobacco, but that the same be deposited in Warehouses under the Lock and Key of the King and Merchant; that all the Duties be reduced to Four Pence Three Farthings the Pound, which is the net Duty, at present, after discounting the Twenty Five *per* Cent; that no Bonds be taken for securing the Duties upon Importation; that all Tobacco be weighed when it is landed, and weighed again when sold and delivered out to the Retailer or Exporter; that such Retailer pay down the Duty according to the last Weight, and only remain answerable to the Merchant for the Overplus of the Price; that all Tobacco be exported Duty-free, and the same Time allowed for Exportation as is now; and that some severer Penalties be annexed to the relanding of Tobacco delivered out for Exportation, or selling it at home: By this Method no Alteration will be made in respect to the Duty, but that will be better secured, and cannot fail of being encreased by suppressing the Multitude of Frauds, which must needs arise from the Merchant's having the Tobacco in his Power, and bonding the Duties: Many Perjuries will be prevented; the Merchant will then have no Interest in lessening the Weights, but for the sake of his Commissions will see that Justice be done to the King and the Planter, and the Custom-House Books will be a Check upon him if he does any wrong; the Planters will be able to chuse their Merchants for their Probity and kind Treatment, and not for their Riches or Credit; the Sword will be taken out of their Hands, and the Balance held more equally between them and us.

Yet we cannot doubt, but many Objections will be raised by our Enemies to this Scheme, and terrible Consequences must be foretold, to follow upon it, even with Respect to our selves: But however that may be, we have this Consolation in being assured, that we cannot be in a worse Condition than we are at this Juncture; and if the Trade should not be restored to a better State, we shall at least be secure in our Poverty, and be defended from those who seek to undoe us.

Signed in the Name and Behalf of the Council.

Williamsburg, June
28, 1732.

ROBERT CARTER, *President.*

JOHN HOLLOWAY, *Speaker of the
House of Burgesses.*