

[About the document: This excerpt is from a newspaper article that appeared in the February 10, 1864 issue of the Evening Star newspaper reporting on the congressional debate over a resolution presented by Senator Charles Sumner to end segregation on streetcars in Washington, D.C.]

Congressional, XXXVIIIth Congress – First Session

Mr. Sumner offered a resolution directing the Committee of the District of Columbia to consider the expediency of providing a law against the exclusion of colored persons from equality of railroad privileges in this city.

Mr. S. spoke of what he termed a recent outrage here, which he had seen mentioned in the New York papers, but not the papers of this city—an officer of the U.S. (colored surgeon, A.G. Augusta, ranking as major) wearing the national uniform, having been ejected from a street car by the conductor, the officer's only offense being his color. He said we had better give up railroads in this District, if we could not have them without these odious distinctions. An incident like this, at this moment, was worse than a defeat in battle. It makes against our cause abroad, and excites distrust.

Mr. Wilkinson agreed with Mr. S that outrages had been committed on these railroads upon colored people, and we should take measures to prevent it.

Mr. Hendricks said if he was to express an opinion on the subject, it would be that the outrage was the other way.