



# THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY GOVERNMENT

## OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

**BILL:** Senate Bill 142 – Legal Holiday – Maryland Emancipation Day – Establishment

**SPONSOR:** Senator Ellis

**HEARING DATE:** March 11, 2021

**COMMITTEE:** Budget and Taxation  
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

**CONTACT:** Intergovernmental Affairs Office, 301-780-8411

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**POSITION:** SUPPORT

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The Office of the Prince George's County Executive **SUPPORTS Senate Bill 142**, which will establish Emancipation Day as a legal State holiday.

By 1865, slavery was abolished in all states. The purpose of Emancipation Day would be to commemorate the emancipation of enslaved people.

The Prince George's County Human Relations Commission (HRC) encourages equal opportunity to live free of discrimination and to eliminate discriminatory practices. Among the many protections enforced by HRC, this Bill considers race, specifically African Americans, who were enslaved for centuries. According to the United States Census, in 2019 approximately 31% of the State's population identified as African American. In Prince George's County, approximately 64% of the population identified as African American. In a jurisdiction that is composed primarily of minorities, we recognize and encourage the growth and development of the entire County in a way that promotes equality, representation, and commemoration of all citizens.

Emancipation Day was recognized by State proclamation in November 2020, again to celebrate the emancipation of enslaved people. This Bill is intended to recognize Emancipation Day as a State legal holiday.

For the reasons stated above, the Office of the Prince George's County Executive **SUPPORTS Senate Bill 142** and asks for a **FAVORABLE** report.