



Peter Franchot
Comptroller

TESTIMONY OF COMPTROLLER PETER FRANCHOT

Support - House Bill 448 - State Government - Legal and Employee Holiday - Juneteenth National Freedom Day

Health and Government Operations Committee

March 16, 2021

Chair Pendergrass, Vice Chair Pena-Melnyk and members of the Committee, it is my pleasure to provide testimony in **support** of **House Bill 448 - State Government - Legal and Employee Holiday - Juneteenth National Freedom Day**. I would like to thank Del. Harrison for sponsoring this important legislation, and the Committee for providing the opportunity for my testimony to be heard.

It is time that Maryland formally recognize Juneteenth National Freedom Day as a legal holiday. As the oldest nationally celebrated remembrance of the emancipation of enslaved people in the United States, a wider celebration and recognition of Juneteenth will help heal the wounds and awful legacies of slavery. Particularly poignant at this moment in history as our country grapples with the 'original sin' of slavery, an annual legal celebration of Juneteenth will help Marylanders have the conversations we need to have and reach the understanding that we must achieve to move forward together in righteousness.

For the reasons stated above, I respectfully request a **favorable report** for House Bill 448. Thank you for your time and consideration.

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