

**HB297 w letterhead (1).pdf**

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# THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF MARYLAND

SUPPORT

HB 297

Maryland Lynching Truth and Reconciliation Commission - Reporting and Sunset Extension

Judicial Proceedings Committee

3/17/2021

Good afternoon Chair Smith, Vice Chair Waldstreicher, and members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee. My Name is Rev. Linda Boyd and I am here on behalf of the Maryland Episcopal Diocese. The Diocese represents 108 parishes and over 45,000 parishioners stretching from Western Maryland to Calvert County. The Maryland Episcopal Diocese supports HB 297.

With the Covid pandemic that is still ongoing, and has been for over a year now, it has been exceedingly difficult for many commissions to do proper historical research, such as getting into archives and doing personal interviews. This is a process that cannot and should not be rushed.

Researching and writing about the history of lynching in Maryland and other states is especially important as part of our collective history. These horrible acts need to be addressed with facts and allowing the sorrow that is still felt by families to be recognized. This can only happen with a commission such as this one.

We feel strongly that we must continue to learn about and educate all people about this shameful part of our history with an ongoing aim for reconciliation and reparations. This Commission should be given time to complete their report.

We urge a favorable report on HB 297.

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Uploaded by: Coelho, Elizabeth

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**Hon. Larry Hogan**  
Governor  
**Hon. Boyd K. Rutherford**  
Lt. Governor  
**Timothy D. Baker**  
State Archivist and  
Commissioner of Land Patents  
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Chairman, Maryland Commission  
on Artistic Property



*Hall of Records Commission:*  
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**Peter Kanelos, Ph.D.**  
**Hon. Nancy K. Kopp**  
**Mark Letzer**  
**Hon. Samuel I. Rosenberg**  
**David Wilson, Ed.D.**

March 12, 2021

**BILL:** HB 297, Maryland Lynching Truth and Reconciliation Commission - Reporting and Sunset Extension

**COMMITTEE:** Health and Government Operations Committee

**POSITION:** Letter of Support

The Maryland State Archives is an active member of the Maryland Lynching Truth and Reconciliation Commission and is submitting this letter of support on its behalf. HB 297 extends the term of the Commission by two years to complete the tasks outlined through legislation. The Commission is to hold hearings and conduct research to advance our knowledge about African American Marylanders who were the victims of mob violence in our State.

The Commission has identified over forty incidents of victims who were accused of a crime but were not afforded due process as a result of the violent actions of an extralegal mob and were lynched in Maryland. The COVID-19 pandemic effectively thwarted activities that are specifically mandated by the authorizing legislation. There is much work to be done in regards to research and outreach to communities who were impacted.

The Commission in its first year focused on developing policies, forming committees, and building relationships with key stakeholders. During that time the Commission has selected a Chair and Vice Chair to drive the work, drafted and submitted an interim report, and is now at the point of starting to conduct research and arranging public hearings. This huge undertaking will require additional time and dedicated resources. An extension for this work will allow time for the Commission to write and submit a thoughtful and informed final report. The Maryland State Archives fully supports House Bill 297 and urges a favorable report.

If you have further questions, please contact Liz Coelho, 410-260-640, or [liz.coelho@maryland.gov](mailto:liz.coelho@maryland.gov).

# **LoS - MD LTRC Sunset Extension (Senate).pdf**

Uploaded by: Dove, Spencer

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# State of Maryland

## Commission on Civil Rights

*"Our vision is to have a State that is free from any trace of unlawful discrimination."*



### *Officers*

**Alvin O. Gillard, Executive Director**  
**Nicolette Young, Assistant Director**  
**Glendora C. Hughes, General Counsel**

**Governor**  
**Larry Hogan**  
**Lt. Governor**  
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**Rabbi Binyamin Marwick**  
**Jeff Rosen**  
**Gina McKnight-Smith, PharmD, MBA**

March 17, 2021

### **House Bill 297 – Maryland Lynching Truth and Reconciliation Committee – Reporting and Sunset Extension POSITION: Support**

Dear Chairperson Smith, Vice Chairperson Waldstreicher, and Members of the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee:

The Maryland Commission on Civil Rights (“MCCR”; “The Commission”) is the State agency responsible for the enforcement of laws prohibiting discrimination in employment, housing, public accommodations, and state contracts based upon race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, marital status, familial status, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information, physical and mental disability, and source of income.

House Bill 297 extends the reporting and sunset requirements for the Maryland Lynching Truth & Reconciliation Commission by two years to December 1, 2023, and June 30, 2024, respectively. As you know, MCCR serves as a member of this Commission. MCCR believes that extending the reporting and sunset requirements by one year will better enable the Maryland Lynching Truth & Reconciliation Commission to complete its work and issue a final report to the Governor and General Assembly.

Accordingly, the Maryland Commission on Civil Rights urges a favorable report on HB297. Thank you for your time and consideration of the information contained in this letter. The Maryland Commission on Civil Rights looks forward to the continued opportunity to work with you to improve and promote civil rights in Maryland.

**Senate HB297 MLTRC Extension SPONSOR FAV 210317.pd**

Uploaded by: Peña-Melnyk, Joseline

Position: FAV

JOSELINE A. PEÑA-MELNYK  
*Legislative District 21*  
Prince George's and  
Anne Arundel Counties



*Annapolis Office*  
The Maryland House of Delegates  
6 Bladen Street, Room 241  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
410-841-3502 • 301-858-3502  
800-492-7122 Ext. 3502  
Fax 410-841-3409 • 301-858-3409  
Joseline.Pena.Melnyk@house.state.md.us

*Vice Chair*  
Health and Government  
Operations Committee

*Subcommittees*  
Government Operations and  
Long Term Care

Chair, Public Health and  
Minority Health Disparities

*The Maryland House of Delegates*  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

*District Office*  
P. O. Box 1251  
College Park, Maryland 20741-1251

March 17, 2021

**House Bill 297 – Maryland Lynching Truth and Reconciliation  
Commission – Reporting and Sunset Extension**

**SPONSOR TESTIMONY: Joseline Peña-Melnyk (Favorable)**

Chairman Smith, Vice Chair Waldstreicher and members of Judicial Proceedings Committee, I seek a favorable vote for House Bill (HB) 297, which revises the date for submitting the final report and extends the Commission's cessation date.

In 2019, our legislature voted unanimously to create the Maryland Lynching Truth and Reconciliation Commission. In doing so, Maryland became the first state in the nation to launch this effort to heal the horrific wounds of racial injustice. Since then, Maryland's Commission has received national recognition for its work. On November 2, 2020, the Commission was awarded \$300,000 in federal funding to study unsolved lynching crimes in our state. This Commission is doing ground-breaking work, at a time not seen before in our history. The coronavirus pandemic created obstacles to conducting public meetings required of the Commission. Additionally, this past year has demonstrated the hunger for racial justice, through the lens of too numerous deaths of Black Americans at the hands of their local police. The Commission's work is so important and impactful that President Biden's team has reached out to the Commission for guidance in the development of a similar Federal Commission. This bill will enable the Commission to complete its vital work.

To address past injustices, we must fully understand them and acknowledge the lasting impact on these victims' families. The Commission has established themselves, with several Black Historians, as the premier entity to preserve oral history and receive documentation from families directly impacted by these heinous crimes.

Thank you for the opportunity to present HB 297. I respectfully request your favorable vote of support of this bill.