

**Sydnor\_SB 478 Testimony Fav-JPR.pdf**

Uploaded by: Charles E. Sydnor III

Position: FAV

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Baltimore County



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Judicial Proceedings Committee  
Executive Nominations Committee

*Joint Committees*

Administrative, Executive, and  
Legislative Review

Children, Youth, and Families

*Senate Chair*  
Legislative Ethics

*Chair*  
Baltimore County Senate Delegation

THE SENATE OF MARYLAND  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**Testimony Regarding SB 478**  
**Maryland Lynching Truth and Reconciliation Commission –**  
**Reporting and Sunset Extension**  
**Before the Judicial Proceedings Committee**  
**February 23, 2023**

Good afternoon Chair Smith, and Committee Members,

In 2019 the Maryland General Assembly established the Maryland Lynching Truth and Reconciliation Commission (MLTRC) to research cases of racially motivated lynchings and to hold public meetings and regional hearings.<sup>1</sup>

The first task assigned to the MLTRC was to submit an interim report, which occurred in September 2020.

Senate Bill 478 seeks to extend the Commission for two years to give it more time to complete its work. I ask for a favorable report on SB 478.

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<sup>1</sup> Maryland Lynching Truth and Reconciliation Commission. [Interim Report](#). September 21, 2020, 3.

**SB 478 Support Letter (Fakunle).pdf**

Uploaded by: David Fakunle

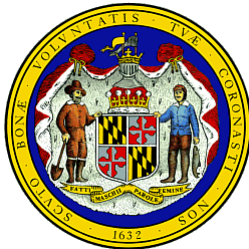
Position: FAV

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David O. Fakunle, Ph.D.

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# Maryland Lynching Truth and Reconciliation Commission



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Stephanie Suerth

Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee  
Maryland General Assembly

February 19, 2023

To the Judicial Proceedings Chair, Vice Chair and Committee:

I thank you for the opportunity to express my support for SB 478, and my gratitude to Sen. Charles Sydnor and the bill co-sponsors for their enthusiasm in championing this worthy effort.

I was introduced to the horrors of racial terror lynching at 14 years old, when a permanent exhibit at The National Great Blacks In Wax Museum in Baltimore first opened in 2001. The visuals of barbarism committed against Black men, women and children, such as the lynchings of Hayes and Mary Turner (including their unborn child) were jarring to say the least. It scared me to be surrounded by explicit manifestations of hate in the United States against its own citizens, ones that looked just like me...and it prepared me for the work to come. I never imagined that 18 years later, I would be called to chair the first and only state-level commission of its kind in the U.S., and as a representative of The National Great Blacks In Wax Museum.

As I tell people, this story is not fun nor pleasant. It is not easy to introduce the unaware to the depths of inhumanity perpetrated against families and communities simply because of their existence. But it is the **truth**. It is Maryland's truth, and it is the United States' truth, and neither can no longer ignore the impact it continues to have. Del. Joseline Peña-Melnyk acknowledged that in 2019 and because of her fortitude and that of many others, the Maryland Lynching Truth and Reconciliation Commission (MLTRC) exists.

For the past 3+ years, the MLTRC has been successful in chronicling the stories of Maryland's 40+ confirmed racial terror lynchings, with foci on reaffirming the humanity of the victims and catalyzing healing for the families and communities most affected by these sadistic acts. Along with the five hearing sessions that have occurred across Maryland so far, from the western region to the Eastern Shore, the MLTRC has uncovered evidence of additional acts of racial terror. Concurrently the MLTRC has been recognized as an exemplar of 21<sup>st</sup> century restorative practices, and it is an honor that local, state, national and international entities see through the Commission possibilities for genuine truth-telling, healing and justice. Support from the DOJ

For more information on the Maryland Lynching Truth and Reconciliation Commission, visit  
<https://msa.maryland.gov/lynching-truth-reconciliation/>

Bureau of Justice Assistance's Emmett Till Cold Case Investigations and Prosecution Program, and interactions with the Department of the Interior and the White House, are but a few examples the Commission's validation and empowerment among those committed to reconciliation as it should happen **today**.

As the MLTRC continues its work, it seeks a stronger commitment from the legislature that created it. Resources to support the Commission's research capacity is critical, as it is the foundation of all subsequent efforts including the 5+ remaining hearing sessions to conduct across the state. Along with research, the Commission is steadfast in crafting an educational framework that encourages institutions and its instructors to embrace this history for its past and current relevance. Additionally, the Commission intends to continue utilizing its platform to elevate other forms of injustice against People of Color in Maryland and beyond, such as the health disparities that are just as devastating than any noose could ever be. Thus, assistance with strengthening its public profile is essential because the world is listening to what the Commission has to say. Finally, the MLTRC embraces this opportunity to cultivate a new generation of historians, researchers, genealogists and educators, and therefore appeals for resources to support learning experiences for undergraduate and graduate students at Maryland's four HBCUs, including Morgan State University for whom I am honored to also represent on the MLTRC.

Time has once again catalyzed a moment that calls for a movement towards meaningful change, and the MLTRC proudly accepts its responsibility within that movement. In the spirit of Maryland's motto, the Commission is dedicated to strong, significant deeds and gentle yet firm words. I thank the committee for its consideration and hope that it will vote favorably in support of SB 478, so that the MLTRC may more strongly continue its contributions to assuring Maryland citizens' unalienable right to not just exist, but *live*.

For Healing, Justice & Peace,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David O. Fakunle". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "D".

David O. Fakunle, Ph.D.  
Chair, Maryland Lynching Truth and Reconciliation Commission

**SB 478 MCCR Testimony 02.23.23.pdf**

Uploaded by: Gerald Ford

Position: FAV



# State of Maryland Commission on Civil Rights

*Respect...Integrity...Effective Communication*

February 23, 2023

## **SB 478 Maryland Lynching Truth and Reconciliation Commission Reporting and Sunset Extension**

**POSITION: Support**

**Governor**  
Wes Moore

**Lt. Governor**  
Aruna Miller

**Commission Chair**  
Stephanie Suerth, MPA,  
CCEP

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Cleveland L. Horton II

**Assistant Director**  
Martine Chery

**General Counsel**  
Glendora C. Hughes

**Director of Education  
& Outreach**  
Kara N. Hunt, Ph.D.

Dear Chairperson Smith, Vice Chairperson Waldstreicher, and Members of the Senate Judiciary 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.

SB 478 extends the time for the submission of the final report of the Maryland Lynching Truth and Reconciliation Commission (“the Commission”) to December 1, 2024, and extends the termination date of the Commission to June 30, 2025.

MCCR supports the extension of time for the Maryland Lynching Truth and Reconciliation Commission to complete its very important work investigating and reporting the truth about lynching in the State of Maryland, as well as recommend what steps to be taken that may lead to reconciliation. The unpredicted health crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic slowed the work of the Commission and made meeting the original deadline next to impossible. Therefore, in the interest of thoroughness and accuracy, providing the Commission the additional time ensure the State will receive a more complete report on December 1, 2024.

For these reasons, the Maryland Commission on Civil Rights urges a favorable vote on HB 49. 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.

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

William Donald Schaefer Tower, 6 Saint Paul Street, Suite 900, Baltimore, Maryland 21202-1631  
Phone: 410-767-8600 · Toll Free: 1-800-637-6247 · Maryland Relay: 711 · Fax: 410-333-1841  
Website: [mccr.maryland.gov](http://mccr.maryland.gov) · E-Mail: [mccr@maryland.gov](mailto:mccr@maryland.gov)

**2023-02-23 SB478 (Support).pdf**

Uploaded by: Hannibal Kemerer

Position: FAV



**ANTHONY G. BROWN**  
*Attorney General*



**CANDACE McLAREN LANHAM**  
*Chief of Staff*

**CAROLYN A. QUATTROCKI**  
*Deputy Attorney General*

**STATE OF MARYLAND**  
**OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL**

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February 23, 2023

**TO:** The Honorable Will Smith Jr.  
Chair, Judicial Proceedings Committee

**FROM:** Hannibal G. Williams II Kemerer  
Chief Counsel, Legislative Affairs, Office of the Attorney General

**RE:** SB478– Maryland Lynching Truth and Reconciliation Commission –  
Reporting and Sunset Extension (**Support**)

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The Office of the Attorney General supports SB 478, Senator Charles Sydnor's bill to extend the Maryland Lynching Truth and Reconciliation Commission's final report deadline from December 1, 2023, to December 1, 2024, and to extend the Commission's sunset from June 30, 2024, to June 30, 2025. Senate Bill 478 will permit the Commission time to complete its important work.

For the foregoing reason, we urge a favorable report on SB 478.

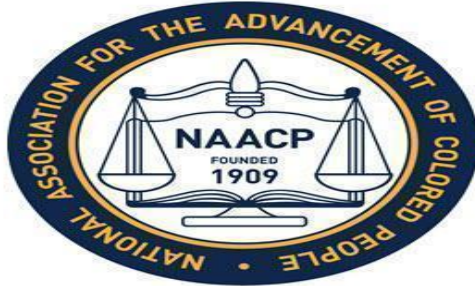
cc: Committee Members

This bill letter is a statement of the Office of Attorney General's policy position on the referenced pending legislation. For a legal or constitutional analysis of the bill, Members of the House and Senate should consult with the Counsel to the General Assembly, Sandy Brantley. She can be reached at 410-946-5600 or sbrantley@oag.state.md.us

**Support SB 0478.pdf**

Uploaded by: Ryan Coleman

Position: FAV



# Randallstown

**P.O. Box 731 Randallstown, MD 21133**

February 22, 2023

Judicial Proceeding Committee  
2 East Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: SUPPORT SB 0478-Maryland Lynching Truth and Reconciliation Commission-Repoprting and Sunset Extension Dear Chair Clippinger:

Dear Chair William C. Smith, VC Jeff Waldstreicher:

May it be known the mission of the Randallstown NAACP is to secure equal rights in order to eliminate race-based discrimination and ensure the health and well-being of all persons in Baltimore County and the State of Maryland.

The Maryland Lynching Truth and Reconciliation Commission is authorized to research cases of racially motivated lynchings and hold public meetings and regional hearings where a lynching of an African American by a white mob has been documented. The commission has investigated over 35 cases of documented cases of lynching in Maryland.

President Coleman stated, "This bill will uncover more information about each of these lynching cases and then provide venues for people to talk about these episodes, in particular for descendants of the victims and perpetrators to talk about their feelings and reactions and how these crimes have affected their lives. It will also put into proper historical context these troubling events that did occur in the United States and Maryland."

**The Randallstown Branch of the NAACP urges a favorable report from the committee on SB 0478.**

yours,

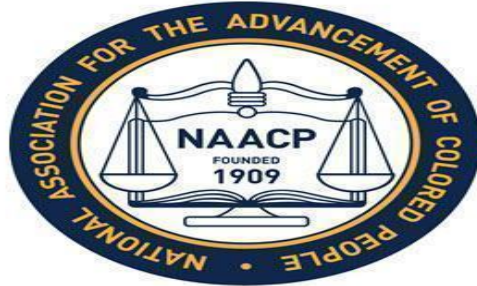
Ryan Coleman  
Randallstown NAACP, President  
<http://randallstownnaacp.yolasite.com>



**Support SB 0478r.pdf**

Uploaded by: Ryan Coleman

Position: FAV



# Randallstown

**P.O. Box 731 Randallstown, MD 21133**

February 22, 2023

Judicial Proceeding Committee  
2 East Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: SUPPORT SB 0478-Maryland Lynching Truth and Reconciliation Commission-Reporting and Sunset Extension

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**The Randallstown Branch of the NAACP urges a favorable report from the committee on SB 0478.**

yours,

Ryan Coleman  
Randallstown NAACP, President  
<http://randallstownnaacp.yolasite.com>

