



THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF MARYLAND

Support

SB 76 Legal Holiday - Maryland Emancipation Day - Establishment
Education, Health and Environmental Affairs & Budget and Taxation Committees

2/27/2020

Testimony presented by Al Collins

Good afternoon, my name is Al Collins and I am here today representing the Episcopal Diocese of Maryland and the Maryland Chapter of the Union of Black Episcopalians. We support the proposed legislation SB 76 – Legal Holiday – Maryland Emancipation Day – Establishment.

Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation on September 22, 1862. It freed all the slaves in the Confederate states, but slaves in Border States loyal to the Union remained enslaved. It only applied to states in rebellion (Confederate states).

The Emancipation Proclamation was an executive order issued on January 1, 1863, by President Lincoln freeing slaves in all portions of the United States not then under Union control (that is, within the Confederacy). The Emancipation Proclamation was the result of a multiracial, concerted effort of men and women who bore witness to the truth about slavery.

There is significant history regarding this important legislation. November 1, 1864 marked a pivotal day in Maryland's history when a new state constitution freed all those held in bondage within its boundaries. The decision made Maryland one the earliest states to abolish slavery – a full year ahead of the 13th Amendment.

The Emancipation Proclamation led the way to total abolition of slavery in the United States. With the Emancipation Proclamation, the aim of the war changed to include the freeing of slaves in addition to preserving the Union of the earliest states that abolished slavery.

SB 76 will serve as a reminder of the challenges then and now as it relates to this important and painful subject. We encourage a favorable report.



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