

JANICE HAYES-WILLAMS, Historian

Senator Arthur Ellis, District 28
James Senate Office Building
Room 302
11 Bladen Street
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

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FAVORABLE – Maryland Senate Bill, **MD SB 76 2020**, Maryland Emancipation Day

Greetings Senator Ellis,

Thank you Senator Ellis. This Bill is long overdue.

I am a native of the State of Maryland and descend from captured Africans imported to the New World held in lifelong bondage as chattel property, slavery. I believe that Maryland Emancipation Day is more important than Independence Day for African Americans and Maryland Emancipation Day should a Legal Holiday. In the words of Frederick Douglass, "What to the Slave, is the Fourth of July".

Throughout my public education, there was little mention of my ancestors and their contributions to the State and Country. My ancestors were always in the little colored box off to the side in Maryland text books. Black children were taught that all Black (Negro) people were slaves. Lincoln was the Great Emancipator because freed the slaves. My hometown, Annapolis, was once to home of four signers of the Declaration of Independence; a Carroll, a Chase, a Paca, and a Stone.

Maryland's controversial 3rd Constitution ripped the State in half, as Legislators deliberated over abolishing slavery and indentured servitude and other measures. At the same time my ancestors walked from slavery and joined the USCT (United State Colored Troops).

Most Marylanders do not know this history. Perhaps white Marylanders discouraged it. The Sandy Point Lighthouse Keeper witnessed the carnage in Broadneck, Anne Arundel County, 5 day after abolishing slavery in Maryland. <http://www.freedmen.umd.edu/tdavis.htm>

Maryland Emancipation Day, deserves to be a Legal Holiday. This day should be a day of reflection over the entire State of Maryland, to honor all "Heroes" in the Abolishment of Slavery. Lest we never forget November 1, 1864.

Please feel free to use my documentary, "Annapolis 1864" as testimony. The link is <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=90Aylsmdm8I#action=share> . I will be in attendance on February 27, 2002.

Again, thank you for this Legislation. Wishing you well.

Best,
/S/

Janice Hayes-Williams, Historian
Anne Arundel County

Attached:
Letter from the Sandy Point Lighthouse Keeper, 1864

cc: Steuart Pittman, County Executive, Anne Arundel County
Jackie Allsup, President, Anne Arundel County, NAACP
Carl O. Snowden, Convener, Caucus of African-American Leaders
Rev. Tamara England Wilson, D. Min., Chair, Maryland Commission of African American
History and Culture