

Written Testimony for **HB 1422/SB 587**: State Government - Maryland
Reparations Commission - Please **VOTE NO** on this bill.

Dear Health and Government Operations Committee and Education, Energy and the Environment Committee:

This bill's synopsis reads: "...Establishing the Maryland Reparations Commission to study and make recommendations relating to appropriate benefits to be made to individuals whose ancestors were enslaved in the State or were impacted by certain inequitable government policies; and requiring the Commission to submit a preliminary report by January 1, 2027, and a final report of its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly by November 1, 2027..."

The bill also states "Individuals impacted by historical inequality" means: (i) individuals having origins in **any of the Black racial groups of Africa**; and (ii) individuals whose ancestors were: 1. enslaved in the State; or 2. impacted by inequitable government policies..."

It further states "...The Commission shall: (i) study and make recommendations relating to appropriate benefits to be offered to individuals impacted by historical inequality... the Commission shall examine: (i) reparations payments made and benefits offered in the United States by the federal government, states, cities, religious institutions, and colleges and universities; (ii) types of benefits appropriate for reparations, including **official statements of apology, monetary compensation, property tax rebates, social service assistance, licensing and permit fee waivers and reimbursement, down payment assistance for the purchase of residential real property, business incentives, child care, debt forgiveness, and higher education tuition payment waivers and reimbursement**; ...(iv) inequitable government policies, the size of the impacted populations, and **how public and private institutions benefited from these policies**; and (v) any other topic deemed appropriate by the Commission..."

Recommendations made by the Commission under paragraph (1) of this subsection shall include: (vi) if monetary compensation is a type of reparation recommended by the Commission: ...potential sources of funding, including **fees paid by private businesses and organizations in the State that have benefited from the institution of slavery or inequitable government policies**; ...**The Commission may seek the assistance of State agencies** in conducting the study or making recommendations under this section..."

This is a discriminatory and racist bill. This bill discriminates against anyone who would not be determined by the "Commission" to be descended from "individuals enslaved in

the State”!! The entire premise of this bill is to **discriminate against non-descendants** of “individuals enslaved in the State”.

This is a bill that will primarily benefit African Americans. What about Hispanic Americans, Asian Americans, Native Americans and Alaska Natives Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islanders, for example? These groups would **NOT** receive any **official statements of apology, monetary compensation, property tax rebates, social service assistance, licensing and permit fee waivers and reimbursement, down payment assistance for the purchase of residential real property, business incentives, child care, debt forgiveness, and higher education tuition payment waivers and reimbursement**...And, in addition, this Commission will seek to punish “**public and private institutions (that) benefited from these policies**” and “historical inequality”. So now we are going to **discriminate against all non-Black people and their businesses**, because of an ugly time in our country’s history that happened generations ago and that has nothing to do with current reality. No one can go back and change what happened, no matter how badly one wants to.

Also, and this is extremely important, **Free Blacks owned slaves** in the 13 colonies **since the 1600s**. By 1790, 48 Black people owned 143 slaves in Maryland. One Black Maryland farmer, Nat Butler, regularly purchased and sold Black people. In 1830, 13.7% of America’s Black population was free. Of that group, **3,776 owned a grand total of 12,907 slaves**. So, are we going to go after the current relatives those Free Blacks that owned slaves as well? Are we going to make sure that their current relatives and their businesses pay for owning other Black people?

This bill is the **very definition of discrimination and racism** and should **NOT** be allowed in any way!! It primarily **targets White/Caucasian Americans and their businesses** and is a violation of their civil rights!! In fact, this discriminatory and racist bill should be reported to the federal and state governments, to those departments that handle discriminatory issues and practices!!

In light of this, please **VOTE NO** on this bill to show Marylanders that you will not tolerate or have any part of discriminatory and racist practices in this state!!

Thank you.

Respectfully,

Trudy Tibbals
Mother of 3 and Maryland Resident

