

Chapter 792

(House Bill 1300)

AN ACT concerning

African American Heritage Preservation Program and Maryland Commission for Women – Renaming and Alterations

FOR the purpose of renaming the African American Heritage Preservation Program to be the Speaker Adrienne A. Jones African American Heritage Preservation Program; repealing the authority of the Secretary of Human Services to appoint the executive director of the Maryland Commission for Women; providing that the executive director of the Commission is not a special appointee and is in the skilled service in the State Personnel Management System; altering the duties of the Commission; and generally relating to the African American Heritage Preservation Program and the Maryland Commission for Women.

BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,Article – Housing and Community DevelopmentSection 6-212(a)(5)Annotated Code of Maryland(2019 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,

Article – Human Services

Section 2-402

Annotated Code of Maryland

(2019 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,

Article – Human Services

Section 2-405 and 2-406

Annotated Code of Maryland

(2019 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,Article – State Finance and ProcurementSection 5A-330(a)(1)Annotated Code of Maryland(2021 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,Article – State Finance and ProcurementSection 5A-330(a)(8) and (b)(1)Annotated Code of Maryland(2021 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

Article – Housing and Community Development

6–212.

(a) Subject to subsection (b) of this section, a sustainable community shall receive priority for State funding under the:

*(5) **SPEAKER ADRIENNE A. JONES African American Heritage [Grant] PRESERVATION Program under Title 5A, Subtitle 3 of the State Finance and Procurement Article.***

Article – Human Services

2–402.

(a) There is a Maryland Commission for Women in the Department.

(b) The Commission shall report to the Governor and the General Assembly through the Secretary.

2–405.

(a) The [Secretary shall appoint an] executive director of the Commission **IS NOT CONSIDERED A SPECIAL APPOINTEE.**

(b) The executive director:

(1) shall be a merit employee of the Department; AND

(2) IS IN THE SKILLED SERVICE IN THE STATE PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM.

(c) The executive director is entitled to the compensation provided in the State budget.

2–406.

(a) (1) The Commission shall:

(i) stimulate and encourage study and review of the status of women in the State;

(ii) strengthen [home life] **THE CONDITIONS FOR WOMEN IN ~~AND OUT OF THE HOME~~ SOCIETY** by directing **CRITICAL** attention to critical problems confronting women ~~as wives, mothers, homemakers, and workers~~ **IN THEIR VARIOUS ROLES;**

[(iii) recommend methods of overcoming discrimination against women in public and private employment;

(iv) encourage women to become candidates for public office;

(v) promote more effective methods for enabling women to develop skills, continue education, and be retrained;]

(III) CONDUCT RESEARCH ON ISSUES THAT IMPACT WOMEN AND IDENTIFY EXISTING DISPARITIES;

(IV) CONDUCT STUDIES AND ASSIST WITH PROGRAMS, SEMINARS, AND CONFERENCES TO RAISE PUBLIC AWARENESS ABOUT ISSUES IMPACTING WOMEN;

~~(IV)~~ **(V) SUPPORT POLICIES AND PROGRAMS THAT PROMOTE THE WELL-BEING OF WOMEN;**

~~(V)~~ **(VI) ~~PROVIDE PUBLICITY FOR~~ RAISE PUBLIC AWARENESS OF A WIDE RANGE OF ISSUES AFFECTING WOMEN, INCLUDING ~~PERSONAL GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT~~ ECONOMIC SECURITY, LIFE TRANSITIONS, AND ~~CAREER-RELATED ISSUES~~ WOMEN'S HEALTH;**

~~(VI)~~ **(VII) PROMOTE AND ASSIST STATEWIDE WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS, LOCAL COMMISSIONS FOR WOMEN, AND LOCAL VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS FOCUSED ON IMPROVING CONDITIONS FOR WOMEN;**

~~(VII)~~ **(VIII) ADVOCATE FOR LEGISLATION SUPPORTING ~~WAGE EQUALITY, ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT, FOSTERING~~ WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT, WOMEN'S HEALTH, CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT, SOCIAL INCLUSION ~~AND HUMAN RELATIONS~~, AND OTHER POLICIES THAT PROMOTE THE EQUALITY AND FLOURISHING OF ALL PEOPLE;**

~~(VIII)~~ **ENCOURAGE AND EMPOWER WOMEN TO COMPETE FOR LEADERSHIP ROLES AND PROVIDE NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN THROUGHOUT THEIR CAREERS;**

(IX) RECOMMEND STRATEGIES TO REDUCE DISCRIMINATION AND INCREASE OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN IN EMPLOYMENT, EDUCATION, THE LAW, STATE GOVERNMENT, AND ELECTED AND APPOINTED POSITIONS ACROSS PROFESSIONS AND WITHIN SOCIETY;

(IX) (X) OFFER SUPPORT PARTNER ORGANIZATION PROGRAMS ON CAREER DEVELOPMENT, FINANCIAL WELLNESS, AND VIOLENCE PREVENTION;

[(vi)] ~~(X)~~ **(XI)** secure appropriate recognition of women's accomplishments and contributions to the State;

[(vii)] work to develop healthy attitudes within the framework of the Commission's responsibilities;] and

[(viii)] ~~(XI)~~ **(XII)** inform the executive and legislative branches of government on issues concerning women, including **BY** offering testimony on these issues before legislative and administrative bodies.

(2) The Commission may:

(i) act as a clearinghouse for activities to avoid duplication of effort; and

(ii) make surveys and appoint advisory committees in **ALL** fields **AFFECTING THE LIVES OF WOMEN IN THE STATE**, including education, social services, labor laws and employment policies, law enforcement, health and safety, new and expanded services, legal rights, family relations, human relations, and volunteer services.

(b) Through the Secretary, the Commission shall submit an annual report including recommendations based on the Commission's studies to the Governor and, subject to § 2-1257 of the State Government Article, to the General Assembly.

(c) The Commission may not adopt regulations.

Article – State Finance and Procurement

5A-330.

(a) (1) In this section the following words have the meanings indicated.

(8) "Program" means the SPEAKER ADRIENNE A. JONES African American Heritage Preservation Program.

(b) (1) *There is [an] A SPEAKER ADRIENNE A. JONES African American Heritage Preservation Program in the Trust.*

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect October 1, 2026.

Approved by the Governor, May 26, 2026.