

# **LoS - Maryland Emancipation Day.pdf**

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Position: FAV

# State of Maryland

## Commission on Civil Rights

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



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Jeff Rosen  
Gina McKnight-Smith, PharmD, MBA

March 11, 2021

### **Senate Bill 142 – Legal Holiday - Maryland Emancipation Day - Establishment POSITION: Support**

Dear Chairperson Pinsky, Vice Chairperson Kagan, and Members of the Senate Education, Health & Environmental Affairs 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.

Senate Bill 142 establishes Maryland Emancipation Day as a State legal, public school, bank, and State employee holiday on November 1. Currently, Maryland Emancipation Day has been periodically recognized by local, county, and gubernatorial proclamation.

The Maryland Commission on Civil Rights supports SB142 because establishing November 1 as Maryland Emancipation Day would commemorate an important milestone in our State’s history with the adoption of a new constitution on November 1, 1864. This new constitution marked the first time in our nation’s history that a state voluntarily freed its slaves by popular vote. For Marylanders, November 1 marks a unique and special independence day worthy of the same recognition as July 4.

For these reasons, the Maryland Commission on Civil Rights urges a favorable vote on SB142. 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.

**Maryland Catholic Conference\_FAV\_SB142.pdf**

Uploaded by: Kraska, Jenny

Position: FAV



ARCHDIOCESE OF BALTIMORE † ARCHDIOCESE OF WASHINGTON † DIOCESE OF WILMINGTON

**March 11, 2021**

**SB 142**

**Legal Holiday – Maryland Emancipation Day – Establishment**

**Senate Education, Health & Environmental Affairs Committee**

**SUPPORT**

The Maryland Catholic Conference represents the mutual public policy interests of the three (arch)dioceses serving the state of Maryland, including the Archdiocese of Baltimore, the Archdiocese of Washington, and the Diocese of Wilmington. We offer this testimony in support of Senate Bill 142, which would establish Maryland Emancipation Day as a State legal holiday, a public school holiday, a bank holiday, and a State employee holiday.

Maryland abolished slavery on November 1, 1864, more than a year before the rest of the nation. Elevating this historic and significant event to a State legal holiday will give Marylanders the opportunity to acknowledge and honor a major milestone in our State's history. The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops have reminded us in their recent pastoral letter on racism, *Open Wide Our Hearts: The Enduring Call to Love Again*, that *"The evil of racism festers in part because, as a nation, there has been very limited formal acknowledgement of the harm done to so many, no moment of atonement, no national process of reconciliation and, all too often a neglect of our history. Many of our institutions still harbor, and too many of our laws still sanction, practices that deny justice and equal access to certain groups of people. God demands more from us."*

Having Emancipation Day recognized as a State legal holiday creates opportunities for events to happen throughout the State to help educate Marylanders on the significance of Emancipation while at the same time providing an environment for remembrance and healing.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge a favorable report on Senate Bill 142.

**emancipation by state (2018\_07\_19 16\_31\_51 UTC) (1**

Uploaded by: Soderberg, Susan

Position: FAV

## EMANCIPATION IN THE UNITED STATES

- 1787 -- Northwest Ordinance (3<sup>rd</sup>). The importation of slaves was prohibited in all territories west of the Ohio River and they would be admitted to the Union as free states.
- 1793 – Fugitive Slave Law
- 1807 – British abolish slave trade
- 1808 – U.S. Congress abolish international slave trade (no more importation of slaves)
- 1834 – British abolish slavery in territories
- 1820 – Missouri Compromise. Allowed Missouri to be admitted to the Union as a slave State, but any other territories north of 36°30’ would be admitted as free States
- 1850 – Second, stronger Fugitive Slave Act
- 1857 – Dred Scott decision by U.S. Supreme Court declared that Blacks were not citizens under the U.S. Constitution and territories could have slaves (Missouri Compromise unconstitutional)
- 1861 – First Confiscation Act – fugitive slaves of rebelling states not to be returned
- 1862 – Second Confiscation Act – reinforcing first - property, including slaves, may be confiscated
- 1863 – Emancipation Proclamation. Executive proclamation - slaves in the rebelling states to be free

### **ABOLITION OF SLAVERY BY STATE**

STATE	DATE	MEANS
Vermont	1777	Constitution (not admitted to Union until 1791)
Pennsylvania	1780	Emancipation Act
Massachusetts	1783	Court interpretation of 1780 Constitution
Connecticut	1784*	Emancipation Act
Rhode Island	1784*	Emancipation Act
New Hampshire	1789	State Constitution (subject to interpretation)
New York	1799*	Emancipation Act
New Jersey	1804*	Emancipation Act
District of Columbia	1862, Apr 16	Act of Congress
Territories	1862, June 19	Act of Congress
West Virginia	1863, June*	New State constitution
Maryland	1864, Nov 1	New State constitution by popular vote
Missouri	1865, Jan	State proclamation
Tennessee	1865, Mar	State constitutional amendment
Alabama	1865, Dec 6	13 <sup>th</sup> Amendment to the U.S. Constitution
Arkansas	1865, Dec 6	13 <sup>th</sup> Amendment to the U.S. Constitution
Delaware	1865, Dec 6	13 <sup>th</sup> Amendment to the U.S. Constitution
Florida	1865, Dec 6	13 <sup>th</sup> Amendment to the U.S. Constitution
Georgia	1865, Dec 6	13 <sup>th</sup> Amendment to the U.S. Constitution
Kentucky	1865, Dec 6	13 <sup>th</sup> Amendment to the U.S. Constitution
Louisiana	1865, Dec 6	13 <sup>th</sup> Amendment to the U.S. Constitution (parts 1864)
Mississippi	1865, Dec 6	13 <sup>th</sup> Amendment to the U.S. Constitution
N. Carolina	1865, Dec 6	13 <sup>th</sup> Amendment to the U.S. Constitution
S. Carolina	1865, Dec 6	13 <sup>th</sup> Amendment to the U.S. Constitution
Texas	1865, Dec 6	13 <sup>th</sup> Amendment to the U.S. Constitution
Virginia	1865, Dec 6	13 <sup>th</sup> Amendment to the U.S. Constitution

\* -- gradual emancipation (usually children only, when reach age 21, usually a 20 year end date.)

States that had been admitted to the Union as non-slave states prior to the Civil War were: Ohio (1803), Indiana (1816), Illinois (1818), Maine (1820), Michigan (1837), Iowa (1846), Wisconsin (1848), California (1850), Minnesota (1858), Oregon (1859), and Kansas (Jan., 1861).

For more information go to [www.slavenorth.com](http://www.slavenorth.com)

**testimony SB 142 (1).pdf**

Uploaded by: Soderberg, Susan

Position: FAV

TO: Maryland Senate

Re: Bill SB 142 – Establishment of Maryland Emancipation Day as a Legal Holiday

March 9, 2021

Maryland is the first state south of the Mason-Dixon Line to have freed the slaves within its borders by popular vote. This was signed into law by the Governor of Maryland on Nov. 1, 1864.

We are the **first**, so why do so many people and organizations in our wonderful state of Maryland celebrate Juneteenth, marking 1. The last people to be freed, and 2. The state of Texas.

As a scholar with a Masters degree in American Studies, I have made a primary source study of the freeing of enslaved people in Maryland, and I can assure you that there is plenty of original source material to back up the claim that we are the first.

A recent book that was reviewed in the Washington Post claimed that there were six Southern states that freed their slaves in the last year of the War. This does not refute my original statement that Maryland is the first. As to the other five:

1. Missouri freed its slaves on January 11, 1865 by vote of delegates, not by popular vote
2. West Virginia, June 20, 1863 – gradual, not immediate emancipation
3. Louisiana, 4. Arkansas, 5. Tennessee – slaves only freed in the part of the state governed by the military, and by military government, not vote of the people.

On May 16, 2013, the Governor of Maryland signed a bill making Maryland Emancipation Day, November 1, the official day recognizing the emancipation of slaves in Maryland. Not many people or groups have recognized this or switched from celebrating Juneteenth. We need something stronger, something to draw their attention that they cannot ignore. We need an official state holiday.

Susan Cooke Soderberg  
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**SB142 Testimony\_HRC.pdf**

Uploaded by: Young, Ron

Position: FAV



# THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY GOVERNMENT

## OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

**BILL:** Senate Bill 142 – Legal Holiday – Maryland Emancipation Day – Establishment

**SPONSOR:** Senator Ellis

**HEARING DATE:** March 11, 2021

**COMMITTEE:** Budget and Taxation  
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

**CONTACT:** Intergovernmental Affairs Office, 301-780-8411

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**POSITION:** SUPPORT

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The Office of the Prince George's County Executive **SUPPORTS Senate Bill 142**, which will establish Emancipation Day as a legal State holiday.

By 1865, slavery was abolished in all states. The purpose of Emancipation Day would be to commemorate the emancipation of enslaved people.

The Prince George's County Human Relations Commission (HRC) encourages equal opportunity to live free of discrimination and to eliminate discriminatory practices. Among the many protections enforced by HRC, this Bill considers race, specifically African Americans, who were enslaved for centuries. According to the United States Census, in 2019 approximately 31% of the State's population identified as African American. In Prince George's County, approximately 64% of the population identified as African American. In a jurisdiction that is composed primarily of minorities, we recognize and encourage the growth and development of the entire County in a way that promotes equality, representation, and commemoration of all citizens.

Emancipation Day was recognized by State proclamation in November 2020, again to celebrate the emancipation of enslaved people. This Bill is intended to recognize Emancipation Day as a State legal holiday.

For the reasons stated above, the Office of the Prince George's County Executive **SUPPORTS Senate Bill 142** and asks for a **FAVORABLE** report.