



THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF MARYLAND

SUPPORT

SB462

Education, Health and Environmental Affairs

2/16/2022

Testimony presented by Finley Slenker

Chairman Pinsky, Vice Chair Kagan and Members of the Committee, my name is Finley Slenker, I am 15 years old, and I am a freshman attending Annapolis High School. Today I am representing the Episcopal Diocese of Maryland and the Diocese strongly supports SB 462.

The History of our country and how it was built has been so deviated from reality. The history of our country was interpreted as the result of the hardships and the will of the white man. The history for so many has been pushed aside in the education system to make learning history more comfortable and appealing to the white population. We need to create change and improve the curriculum for U.S. history in schools.

As some of you know, last year this bill was HB 11 and it focused solely on the expansion of African American history in Maryland curriculum. This year as it is now SB 462, focuses on not only those of the African American community, but it has expanded to include many other racial and ethnic groups throughout our history. SB 462 will now include the history of Native Americans, Asian Americans, Pacific Islanders, Hispanic Americans, Women, as well as African Americans and any other groups as determined by the state board.

As a student who is actively involved in learning and interested in history, I have noticed a repeated pattern of the missing parts of our history that leave loops holes in the timeline of other races and ethnic groups in America to focus on the white perspective of our history. I believe that all of those who have struggled and faced discrimination to get to the point of where they are now, are significantly unrepresented in the education system and legislature around the nation.

I strongly urge you all to please vote in favor of SB 462 to help us all understand each other and create a stronger America. Thank you all for allowing me to speak on behalf of SB 462 and all of those who will benefit by this bill. We encourage a favorable report.