



THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF MARYLAND

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 0227:

**State Government – Legal and Employee Holiday – Juneteenth National
Independence Day**

****FAVORABLE****

February 1, 2022

TO: Hon. Shane E. Pendergrass, Chair, Hon. Joseline A. Pena-Melnyk, Vice Chair
and the members of the House Health and Government Committee

FROM: Rev. Kenneth O. Phelps, Jr., Co-Chair, Maryland Episcopal Public Policy
Network, Diocese of Maryland

DATE: February 1, 2022

In 2006, the General convention of the Episcopal Church, USA passed Resolution
2006 – A127 which stated in part;

“[t]hat in the spirit of inclusion, dioceses also be invited to determine whether their
call is to conduct truth and reconciliation processes in regard to other histories and
legacies of racial discrimination and oppression that may be applicable in their
geographic area, while not diminishing the strong call to focus on the history and
legacy of slavery;”

In addition, resolution 2006 – C011, stated in part; the General Convention “urge[d]
the Church at every level to call upon Congress and the American people to support
legislation initiating study of and dialogue about the history and legacy of slavery in
the United States...”

The Episcopal Church has acknowledged its complicity in creating and sustaining the
institution of slavery, and by its resolutions has underscored the importance of telling
this story as part of the larger story of the African experience in America, and how
this truth-telling is vital to our work of reconciliation. The creation of this holiday -
commemorating the end of slavery by marking the day enslaved people in Texas
learned they were free – will be well received as a sign of inclusivity and the intent to
continue to pay serious attention to matters of equity and equality.

The Diocese of Maryland requests a favorable report.