



THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF MARYLAND

SUPPORT

HB 47

Public Schools – Expanded American History – Development of Content Standards and
Implementation

House Ways and Means Committee

1/20/2022

Testimony presented by Finley Slenker

Good afternoon, Madam Chair Atterbeary, Vice Chair Washington and members of the House Ways and Means Committee.

My name is Finley Slenker and today I am representing the Episcopal Diocese of Maryland. 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 of 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 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, HB 47 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. HB 47 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 loopholes 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 underrepresented in the education system and legislature around the nation.

I strongly urge you all to please vote in favor of HB 47 to help us all understand each other and create a stronger America. Thank you all for allowing me to speak on behalf of HB 47 and all of those who will benefit by this bill.

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