



Dear Maryland General Assembly,

I write today in support of HB 0049 *Economic Justice and Racial Reconciliation Act*. With public tax dollars, the State of Maryland and its jurisdictions have engaged in discriminatory practices that harmed African American communities. Briefly, a few of these policies and practices include:

- The delayed building of sewer and other infrastructure systems in Black neighborhoods in Annapolis, Maryland in the early portion of the 1900s.
- Maryland state appraisers and state-licensed real estate agents helped the federal government draft the 1937 Baltimore-area Residential Security Map (covering Baltimore City, Baltimore County and Anne Arundel County). The map redlined Black neighborhoods in Baltimore City and Catonsville, starving them of capital and loans for home buying and small businesses. According to the [Johns Hopkins Sheridan Libraries](#), Francis Smoot (State Appraiser) and L. Korver (Assistant State Appraiser) collaborated in the creation of the discriminatory map.
- In the 1950s and 60s, Black Annapolis neighborhoods were subjected to [urban renewal](#) by the Anne Arundel County government and [City of Annapolis](#), uprooting [33 businesses and 237 residents](#), from a predominantly Black area.
- Additionally, Anne Arundel County [used eminent domain](#) to take Carr's Beach and Sparrow's Beach, which were where a [Black-owned beach resort](#) operated from the 1920s to the 1960s.
- Maryland [underfunded](#) historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs).

These are but a few of the instances we know. Establishing a commission to study Maryland's history would allow for a more complete analysis of how the State of Maryland has played a role in denying and depriving Black neighborhoods of resources, opportunities, equitable tax expenditures, and private bank capital. For this reason, I am urging the General Assembly to pass HB 0049 to make racial equity a reality.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lawrence T. Brown". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Lawrence T. Brown, PhD, MPA

Research Scientist

Center for Urban Health Equity

Morgan State University

Author, *The Black Butterfly: The Harmful Politics of Race and Space in America*