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State Archivist and  
Commissioner of Land Patents  
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on Artistic Property



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February 16, 2023

**BILL: HB 339, Maryland Lynching Truth and Reconciliation Commission - Reporting and Sunset Extension**

**COMMITTEE: Health and Government Operations Committee**

**POSITION: Letter of Support**

The Maryland State Archives is an active member of the Maryland Lynching Truth and Reconciliation Commission and is submitting this letter of support on its behalf. HB 339 extends the term of the Commission by one year to complete the tasks outlined through legislation. The Commission is to hold hearings and conduct research to advance our knowledge about African American Marylanders who were the victims of mob violence in our state.

The Commission has identified over forty incidents of victims who were accused of a crime but were not afforded due process as a result of the violent actions of an extralegal mob and were lynched in Maryland. The COVID-19 pandemic effectively postponed activities that are specifically mandated by the authorizing legislation. While those activities are now underway, there is much work to be done in regards to research and outreach to communities who were impacted.

The Commission is now actively conducting research and holding public hearings. This huge undertaking will require additional time and dedicated resources. While five hearings have been completed, an extension for this work will allow time for the Commission to write and submit a thoughtful and informed final report after the conclusion of the additional hearings throughout the remainder of the state. The Maryland State Archives fully supports House Bill 339 and urges a favorable report.

If you have further questions, please contact Liz Coelho, 410-260-6401 or [liz.coelho@maryland.gov](mailto:liz.coelho@maryland.gov).

Sincerely,

Elaine Rice Bachmann  
State Archivist  
and Commissioner of Land Patents