



THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF MARYLAND

The Maryland Episcopal
Public Policy
Network

Testimony in Support of SB 0139

State Government - Legal and Employee Holiday - Maryland Emancipation Day

****FAVORABLE****

TO: Senator Brian J. Feldman, Chair; Senator Cheryl C. Kagan, Vice Chair; and the members of the Senate Education, Energy and the Environment Committee

FROM: Rev. Ken Phelps, Jr., Director, Maryland Episcopal Public Policy Network, Diocese of Maryland

DATE: March 13, 2025

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 in the State of Maryland 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.