



**Senate Bill 587  
State Government – Maryland Reparations Commission**

ADOS Position: **Support with Amendments** To: **Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee**  
February 27, 2025 From: **ADOS Advocacy Foundation Maryland Chapter**

**ADOS Reparations, Data Disaggregation and a Commission on ADOS Affairs**

The American Descendants of Slavery (ADOS) Advocacy Foundation is a national grassroots advocacy organization with statewide Chapters across the nation. Its mission is to secure through rigorous genealogical research and documentation, lineage-based cash reparations for descendants of U.S. chattel slavery from the federal government and to advocate for a transformative Black agenda. Maryland ADOS is a statewide Chapter with members across the State and whose mission is aligned with the national ADOS Advocacy Foundation.

The American Descendants of Slavery (ADOS) Advocacy Foundation supports Senate Bill 587, which establishes a Maryland reparations commission to study and make recommendations for descendants of chattel slavery in Maryland because we believe Maryland's primary contribution to this national imperative lies in providing robust data and historical insights that inform and strengthen the federal program's design and implementation. Crucially, to refine and strengthen this vital bill, we propose several amendments to address the unique and ongoing harm caused by slavery and its legacy, specifically impacting American Descendants of Slavery (ADOS):

- The bill should mandate state and county agencies to create a data disaggregation plan within the Black/African American category to accurately identify ADOS needs.
- The bill should include two ADOS Maryland Chapter representatives, selected by the Chapter's Executive Council, on the Commission.
- The bill should add an economist and race researcher to the Commission to calculate unpaid wages from slavery in Maryland.
- The bill should establish a Commission on ADOS Affairs with two members from the ADOS Maryland Chapter, selected by the Executive Council.

The 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre and the Maryland Lynching Truth and Reconciliation Commission underscore the enduring consequences of slavery, Jim Crow, and systemic disadvantages for American Descendants of Slavery (ADOS). These historical injustices, combined with persistent disparities in health, housing, education, and economics, necessitate data disaggregation and a dedicated Commission on ADOS Affairs. This commission should collect disaggregated data, analyze the unique challenges ADOS communities face, and recommend targeted policies to address the legacy of slavery.

Precedents like Japanese-American and Holocaust survivor reparations emphasize targeted redress for specific harms. General economic, housing, and education policies, while necessary for a transformative Black agenda, do not constitute reparations for the unique injustices experienced by ADOS. Accurate, disaggregated data is crucial for defining reparations as a remedy for specific harm against a specific group. Establishing a Commission on ADOS Affairs, with ADOS representation, leveraging existing state resources and expertise, and including economic and research expertise are essential first steps toward achieving justice, ensuring any reparative efforts are effective and grounded in historical accuracy.

Given that, WE urge you to support SB 587 with the amendments submitted as written testimony by ADOS Maryland.