

Testimony:

My fellow Marylanders, I am Ya'akov Castro de Almeida, representing District 41 in Baltimore. I stand before you as a descendant of the Bradley Family, whose harrowing history was immortalized in the film *Rosewood* (1997). The question of Maryland Reparations is not an abstract policy debate; it is a moral imperative that weighs heavily upon my heart and conscience.

Today, I seek to serve as the NAACP representative for this critical commission because justice demands nothing less. In Florida, my family is afforded scholarships in recognition of the Rosewood Massacre, but Maryland now has the opportunity to make history becoming only the second state in the nation to establish a Reparations Task Force.

Let us be clear: the descendants of enslaved Marylanders are owed over \$230 billion for generations of uncompensated labor, an amount that dwarfs the state's \$25 billion annual budget. It is our duty not only to recognize this debt but to ensure that any reparative measures are transformational and enduring.

Given Maryland's current fiscal constraints, scholarships and cash payments are a starting point, but they alone will not suffice. True reparations must empower colored families for generations to come. That means the transfer of assets stocks, ETFs, real estate, and precious metals/mineral rights to create lasting generational wealth beyond a single decade.

I commend Senator Benson for her leadership and stand in full support of SB469. The time for action is now. Maryland must not only acknowledge its past but take bold steps toward economic justice that will shape our shared future. - Ya'akov Castro de Almeida