

Testimony – SB0003 Apology and Acknowledgement of the State’s Responsibility in Racial Terror Lynchings

I am writing on behalf of the James Taylor Justice Coalition (JTJC) of Sumner Hall in Chestertown, Kent County, Maryland. Since 2019 the JTJC has been actively working to inform and educate our community on the actions and inactions committed by officials in Kent County that resulted in the extrajudicial lynching of Mr. James Taylor on May 17, 1892. Mr. Taylor was removed from the county jail and lynched by a mob of about 60 masked individuals while as many as 800 citizens stood by and watched. Mr. Taylor never got his day in court and no one was ever charged with the lynching despite the fact that the leaders of the lynching party met with town officials in advance who simply asked that they lynch Mr. Taylor outside of town. The County Officials at the time refused to pay the cost to protect Mr. Taylor despite knowing that a lynching was being planned. On May 17, 2026, on the 134th anniversary of Mr. Taylor’s lynching, the JTJC will erect and dedicate an Equal Justice Initiative historical marker on the site of the lynching.

The JTJC supports SB0003 and believes the State of Maryland, Kent County and the Town of Chestertown need to apologize and formally acknowledge their responsibility in the racial terror lynching of Mr. James Taylor and all others who were lynching in the State of Maryland.

Respectfully,

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Co-Chair

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