

Date: March 12, 2026

To: Senators Sydnor and Augustine

From: Howard County Asian American & Pacific Islander (AAPI) Commission

Re: Support of State Joint Resolution 3: Apology and Acknowledgement of the State's Responsibility in Racial Terror Lynchings

Dear Senators Sydnor and Augustine:

We are the proud members of the Howard County Asian American & Pacific Islander (AAPI) Commission appointed by County Executive Calvin Ball. We are writing in **support of Senate Joint Resolution 0003** issuing an apology and acknowledging the state's complicity with racial terror and further take reparative actions as recommended by the Maryland Lynching Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

The AAPI Commission comprises 20 members representing diverse ethnicities among the AAPI community and agencies in Howard County. The AAPI Commission is dedicated to advising the Howard County Executive on policy initiatives, advocating for issues that impact the AAPI community, and cultivating a safe, welcoming community where AAPI residents feel seen, valued, and heard. We are compelled to speak on this issue in solidarity with Black communities who have faced racial terror lynching in Maryland.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, in the state of Maryland, 32% of 6.3 million Marylanders are Black or African American. In Howard County, 22% of our County's 340,000 population is Black or African American. The Black community is a vibrant and integral part of our county's fabric and has worked diligently—alongside the AAPI community and other protected classes—to advance justice and equity for all.

The 38 documented cases of murder by racial terror lynchings were committed in collusion with various state, county, and government entities, with none of the murderers being held responsible for their heinous crimes. This is evidenced by the state failing to pass anti-lynching legislation in 1898 and 1933, which only furthered the state's role in failing to protect Black Marylanders and bolstering systemic racism. We

know that Asian Americans have also been targets of racial terror, with one of the largest mass lynchings in U.S. history taking place in Los Angeles, CA, on October 24th, 1871.¹ Nearly 20 Chinese immigrants were shot and killed or hanged by an angry mob of nearly 500 people in the “Chinese quarter” of Los Angeles. The history of racial terror lynching is horrific; it is also awful to not apologize for and acknowledge the violent actions of the perpetrators, the collusion of the government in failing to protect Black Marylanders, and the glaring silence around this period of Maryland history.

At the core of restorative justice is fostering accountability, understanding, and healing.² Repairing relationships, rebuilding trust, and addressing the needs of those targeted is crucial in this process. The Maryland Lynching Truth and Reconciliation Commission has made clear that the State failed to protect Black Marylanders and violated their constitutional rights. This failure has contributed to long-term harm for generations. While nothing can bring back the 38 victims murdered in Maryland, a formal apology and acknowledgement by state officials in their predecessors' roles in the perpetration of the violent acts would foster commitment to restorative justice. We are proud to live in Maryland and we want state leaders who are bold enough to face the past in order to build a unified and stronger Maryland for each and every person in this great state. We respectfully request you do the right thing, and pass SJ0003.

Sincerely,

Membership of the Howard County AAPI Commission

¹ <https://asianamericanedu.org/chinese-massacre-of-1871-connecting-past-with-present.html>

² <https://law.wisc.edu/fjr/rjp/justice.html>