

Written Testimony in Support of Senate Joint Resolution 3

Apology and Acknowledgement of the State's Responsibility in Racial Terror Lynchings

My name is Trish Floyd, and I respectfully submit this testimony in support of Senate Joint Resolution 3.

From December 2023 through April 2025, I had the honor of serving as the Project Manager for the Maryland Lynching Truth and Reconciliation Commission. In this role, I worked closely with commissioners, researchers, community members, and families as the state undertook the important task of confronting the history of racial terror lynchings across Maryland.

During this time, I witnessed firsthand the profound impact this history continues to have on communities throughout the state. The Commission held hearings and listening sessions across Maryland where individuals came forward to share deeply personal testimony. These testimonies came from many perspectives, including descendants of victims as well as descendants of those connected to the perpetrators. Despite the different backgrounds of those who testified, one message remained remarkably consistent.

Families of victims repeatedly shared that no formal apology from the State of Maryland had ever been given to them or to their ancestors. For many, this absence of acknowledgment has prolonged generational pain and left families feeling that their loved ones' suffering was never formally recognized by the institutions responsible for protecting their lives.

Listening to these stories was both humbling and sobering. Many descendants spoke about how the trauma of racial terror lynchings continues to echo through generations. Others described how the silence surrounding these events created a void where justice and recognition should have been.

The Commission's work made clear that acknowledgement matters. A formal apology from the state is not simply symbolic. It is a meaningful step toward recognizing historical truth, honoring the victims, and affirming the dignity of the families who have carried these stories for generations.

Senate Joint Resolution 3 represents an important moment for Maryland. By acknowledging the state's responsibility and issuing a formal apology for racial terror lynchings, the General Assembly affirms that these acts were grave injustices and that the lives lost deserve remembrance and respect.

Having witnessed the courage of those who shared their stories before the Commission, I believe strongly that this resolution is a necessary step in the ongoing work of truth, reconciliation, and healing in our state.

I respectfully urge the members of the General Assembly to support Senate Joint Resolution 3.

Sincerely,

Trish Floyd

Former Project Manager

Maryland Lynching Truth and Reconciliation Commission

December 2023 through April 2025