

The Honorable Members of the Government, Labor, and Elections Committee
Annapolis, MD 21401

Subject: Written Testimony in Support of House Bill 0770 – Korean American Day

Dear Honorable Delegates,

My name is Minhee Kim. I am a proud second-generation Korean American and the Project Manager of the League of Korean Americans (LOKA). I write in strong support of HB0770 to establish January 13th as Korean American Day in Maryland.

This bill is deeply personal to me. My mother brought me to the United States and raised me as a single parent. She worked long hours — weekdays, weekends, holidays — at a laundromat to provide stability and opportunity for our family. I grew up watching her fold clothes late into the night, learning English through conversations with customers, and carrying both exhaustion and determination with quiet strength. She sacrificed her comfort so I could have access to education, safety, and possibility.

Her story reflects the experience of many Korean American immigrants in Maryland — individuals who started over with little, worked tirelessly in small businesses and service industries, and contributed to our local economy without recognition or spotlight. They built lives here through perseverance, resilience, and faith in a better future for their children.

Korean American Day commemorates the first Korean immigrants who arrived in 1903. But today, it also represents the generations who followed — families like mine — who helped shape Maryland's communities through hard work and civic engagement. Through my work at LOKA, I now serve many first-generation seniors who endured war, poverty, and the hardship of immigration before rebuilding their lives in this state. Formal recognition matters to them. It affirms that their sacrifices are seen and valued. HB0770 is more than symbolic. It tells immigrant families across Maryland that they belong and that their contributions are woven into the story of our state.

For my mother, for the elders who paved the way, and for the next generation growing up here, I respectfully urge a favorable report on HB0770.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Minhee Kim
Project Manager | League of Korean Americans (LOKA)