

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

Subject: Written Testimony in Support of HB0770 - Korean American Day

Dear Honorable Delegates,

My name is Dayeon Yu. As a member of the League of Korean Americans (LOKA), I respectfully submit this testimony in support of HB0770 to establish January 13th as Korean American Day in Maryland.

My parents immigrated to the United States from Korea during their mid-30s. They faced many challenges from immigrating to a country with a different language and way of living. Despite that, they were able to find a place in this land with successful careers. Establishing January 13th as Korean American Day would serve as an acknowledgement of the hard work and effort it took for first-generation Korean Americans immigrants to come to the United States and become part of American society.

As the daughter of two Korean immigrants living in Maryland, I am torn between two vastly different cultures: American and Korean. By attending an American school and consuming American media, most of my day is spent exposed to American culture. However, I have been raised with Korean culture as well. At home, I eat Korean food, listen to Korean music, and speak in the Korean language. Creating a day to celebrate Korean and American cultures is a way to bridge the gap between them, strengthening the identity of second-generation Korean Americans.

My Maryland city has a thriving community of Korean Americans. Our restaurants, banks, and markets are often written in Korean, demonstrating the deep connections to Korean culture. Even our bakeries and cafes that are not well-known as Korean businesses have been influenced by Korean ambiences and ideas. Establishing January 13th as Korean American Day is an opportunity to recognize the integral role Korean culture has played in the development of such communities.

In order to support Maryland's ever-growing Korean population, I respectfully ask that January 13th be established as Korean American Day.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
Dayeon Yu