

HOUSE BILL 173

P1

6lr0411

By: **Delegates Rosenberg, Angel, Barron, Hayes, Hill, Morhaim, Oaks, Pena-Melnyk, and Sample-Hughes**

Introduced and read first time: January 21, 2016

Assigned to: Health and Government Operations

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Commission on the Solemn Remembrance of the Victims of Lynching**

3 FOR the purpose of establishing the Commission on the Solemn Remembrance of the
4 Victims of Lynching; providing for the composition, chair, and staffing of the
5 Commission; prohibiting a member of the Commission from receiving certain
6 compensation, but authorizing the reimbursement of certain expenses; requiring the
7 Commission to study and make recommendations regarding certain matters;
8 requiring the Commission to report its findings and recommendations to the
9 Governor and the General Assembly on or before a certain date; providing for the
10 termination of this Act; and generally relating to the Commission on the Solemn
11 Remembrance of the Victims of Lynching.

12 Preamble

13 WHEREAS, Various archival sources have identified numerous racially motivated
14 lynchings throughout the State in the 19th and 20th centuries where individuals were
15 accused of a crime and in some cases arrested and jailed; but mob rule intervened and they
16 were murdered before due process took its course; and

17 WHEREAS, The 1933 lynching of George Armwood in the small town of Princess
18 Anne was the catalyst for the future careers of two of this State's leading civil rights
19 leaders, Clarence Mitchell, Jr., and his younger brother, Parren Mitchell; and

20 WHEREAS, There are no public memorials or historical markers in the State
21 remembering the numerous victims of lynchings that occurred in this State; and

22 WHEREAS, Recent events underscore the urgent need for a fuller understanding of
23 the African American experience and to place current challenges in a wider context; now,
24 therefore,

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,

That:

(a) There is a Commission on the Solemn Remembrance of the Victims of Lynching.

(b) The Commission consists of the following members:

(1) one member of the Senate of Maryland, appointed by the President of the Senate;

(2) one member of the House of Delegates, appointed by the Speaker of the House;

(3) the State Archivist, or the State Archivist's designee;

(4) the Director of the Maryland Historical Trust, or the Director's designee;

(5) the Chair of the Commission on African American History and Culture, or the Chair's designee;

(6) the President of the Maryland State Conference of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, or the President's designee;

(7) the Executive Director of the Reginald F. Lewis Museum of African American History and Culture, or the Executive Director's designee;

(8) the President of the National Great Blacks in Wax Museum, or the President's designee;

(9) the President of the Maryland Historical Society, or the President's designee; and

(10) three members of the public, appointed by the Governor, whose training, expertise, or special interest will benefit the purposes of the Commission.

(c) The Governor shall designate the chair of the Commission.

(d) The State Archives shall provide staff for the Commission.

(e) A member of the Commission:

(1) may not receive compensation as a member of the Commission; but

(2) is entitled to reimbursement for expenses under the Standard State Travel Regulations, as provided in the State budget.

1 (f) The Commission shall study and make recommendations regarding the
2 construction of appropriate markers or memorials in solemn remembrance of the victims of
3 lynching in the State.

4 (g) On or before December 1, 2016, the Commission shall report its findings and
5 recommendations to the Governor and, in accordance with § 2-1246 of the State
6 Government Article, the General Assembly.

7 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect June
8 1, 2016. It shall remain effective for a period of 1 year and 1 month and, at the end of June
9 30, 2017, with no further action required by the General Assembly, this Act shall be
10 abrogated and of no further force and effect.