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LDF Commends the Maryland Legislature's Establishment of a Reparations Commission

Yesterday, members of the Maryland State Legislature voted to override the veto of Senate Bill 587, which now establishes a Reparations Commission to study and make recommendations to address discrimination and other harms faced by individuals whose ancestors were enslaved in Maryland or were impacted by Jim Crow era laws and their legacy. With this action, Maryland became the fourth state in the United States to establish such a commission to study the present impact of slavery and Jim Crow era laws on Black residents. SB 587 was introduced in January 2025 by Senator Anthony Muse. The vote to enact the bill and override the veto exceeded the required three-fifths majority needed in both chambers of the Maryland legislature.

Demetria McCain, Director of Policy at LDF, issued the following statement:

“In Maryland, past and present discrimination drives significant racial disparities in housing, employment, healthcare, and much more. Establishment of a Reparations Commission is an important step toward addressing historic and perpetuated harms, one that can ultimately help level the playing field for Black Marylanders while strengthening the economy for the state as a whole.

“Higher rates of poverty, lower life expectancies, and a lack of investment in infrastructure in Black communities are all too familiar signs of discriminatory public and private policies, exploitation and disinvestment. It is clear reparative solutions are needed. Because of this, we are deeply appreciative of the Maryland Legislative Black Caucus’ effort to establish a Reparations Commission that will help document the harms that persists.”

You can learn more about the bill and its vote history [here](#).

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Founded in 1940, the Legal Defense Fund (LDF) is the nation's first civil rights law organization. LDF's Thurgood Marshall Institute is a multi-disciplinary and collaborative hub within LDF that launches targeted campaigns and undertakes innovative research to shape the civil rights narrative. In media attributions, please refer to us as the Legal Defense Fund or LDF. Please note that LDF has been completely separate from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) since 1957 — although LDF was originally founded by the NAACP and shares its commitment to equal rights.