

HOUSE BILL 159

Q7

2lr0878

(PRE-FILED)

By: **Delegate Amprey**

Requested: October 20, 2021

Introduced and read first time: January 12, 2022

Assigned to: Health and Government Operations

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Economic Justice and Racial Reconciliation Act**

3 FOR the purpose of establishing the Commission for Economic Justice and Racial
4 Reconciliation to study racial disparities in wealth and resources as a result of tax
5 laws and systems in place in the State during a certain period of time and to make
6 recommendations relating to compensation of the State's African American
7 communities for racial disparities identified by the Commission; and generally
8 relating to the Commission for Economic Justice and Racial Reconciliation.

9 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
10 That:

11 (a) There is a Commission for Economic Justice and Racial Reconciliation.

12 (b) The Commission consists of the following members:

13 (1) two members of the Senate of Maryland, appointed by the President of
14 the Senate;

15 (2) two members of the House of Delegates, appointed by the Speaker of
16 the House;

17 (3) the Comptroller of the Treasury, or the Comptroller's designee;

18 (4) the State Archivist, or the State Archivist's designee;

19 (5) one member of the Maryland Historical Society, designated by the
20 President of the Maryland Historical Society; and

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



(6) the following members, jointly appointed by the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House:

(i) one economist who is knowledgeable about the African American economic gap;

(ii) one anthropologist or sociologist who is knowledgeable about African American culture and society;

(iii) one legal scholar or attorney who is knowledgeable about systemic structures of discrimination; and

(iv) two representatives of African American-led organizations.

(c) (1) The President of the Senate shall designate one of the members appointed from the Senate of Maryland as cochair of the Commission.

(2) The Speaker of the House shall designate one of the members appointed from the House of Delegates as cochair of the Commission.

(d) The Office of the Comptroller 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.

(f) The Commission shall:

(1) study historical laws and systems in place in the State from the Reconstruction Era through the enactment of the federal Civil Rights Act of 1964 relating to taxation, the award of tax credits and exemptions, and the payment of State tax revenue in the form of grants and subsidies to determine the impact the laws and systems had on exacerbating the racial disparity of resources and wealth in the State's African American communities;

(2) determine a monetary amount, including interest, that is appropriate to compensate the State's African American communities for the racial disparities identified in item (1) of this subsection;

(3) study possible sources of State funding that could contribute to a special reparations fund the amount determined under item (2) of this subsection; and

(4) make recommendations for future legislation needed to:

1 (i) establish a special fund to appropriately compensate African
2 American communities in the State for racial disparities identified by the Commission
3 under this subsection; and

4 (ii) provide oversight of the distribution of the funds, whether by a
5 new State entity or an existing State entity.

6 (g) (1) Beginning October 1, 2022, the Commission shall submit, in accordance
7 with § 2–1257 of the State Government Article, quarterly status reports on the work of the
8 Commission to the General Assembly.

9 (2) On or before October 1, 2023, the Commission shall submit an interim
10 report of its findings and recommendations to the Governor and, in accordance with §
11 2–1257 of the State Government Article, the General Assembly.

12 (3) On or before October 1, 2024, the Commission shall submit a final
13 report of its findings and recommendations to the Governor and, in accordance with §
14 2–1257 of the State Government Article, the General Assembly.

15 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July
16 1, 2022. It shall remain effective for a period of 2 years and 6 months and, at the end of
17 December 31, 2024, this Act, with no further action required by the General Assembly, shall
18 be abrogated and of no further force and effect.