



Commission to Study the History of the Uprooting of Black Communities by Public Institutions of Higher Education in the Commonwealth

October 9, 2024, at 1:00 p.m.

General Assembly Building, House Room C-206

<https://studies.viriniageneralassembly.gov/studies/720>

The Commission to Study the History of the Uprooting of Black Communities by Public Institutions of Higher Education in the Commonwealth (the Commission) met in Richmond with Senator Lamont Bagby, vice-chair, presiding.¹ The meeting began with member introductions and approval of the meeting summary, including adoption of a virtual meeting policy, from the August 20, 2024, meeting. Materials presented at the meeting are accessible through the [Commission's meetings webpage](#). Video recording of the meeting is available [here](#).

Commission Organizational Structure

Ashley Binns, Senior Attorney, Division of Legislative Services

Ms. Binns provided an overview of the organizational structure of the Commission, detailing the composition of the membership as set forth in paragraph U of Budget Item 1 of HB 6001 (Torian, 2024 Sp. Sess. I), which established the Commission and its duties.

Discussion: Commission Subcommittees and Subcommittee Assignments

Delegate Delores L. McQuinn, chair

The Commission established subject matter subcommittees, each of which would consist of a certain number of Commission members and would be responsible for a particular task or effort in furtherance of the Commission's purpose.

First, the Commission agreed to establish a subcommittee on institutional outreach for the purpose of establishing a process for contacting and soliciting information from each public institution of higher education in the Commonwealth for the purpose of determining whether each such institution purchased, expropriated, or otherwise took possession of property owned by any individual or entity within the boundaries of a community in which the majority of the residents are Black in order to establish or expand the institution's campus. The Commission also discussed the importance of considering methods for facilitating or encouraging institutions to respond to any notice or letter with the relevant information and, for any institution that does not voluntarily do so, compelling any such institution to do so by making a request for such information under the Virginia Freedom of Information Act (§ 2.2-3700 et seq. of the Code of Virginia). The Commission also considered developing and publicly posting or distributing

¹ **Members Present:** Delegate Delores L. McQuinn (chair), Senator Lamont Bagby (vice-chair), Senator J.D. "Danny" Diggs, Senator Mamie E. Locke, Delegate Bonita G. Anthony, Delegate Karen Keys-Gamarra, Delegate Jeion A. Ward, Peter A. Blake, Alison Buckner (designee for Secretary Aimee Rogstad Guidera), Dr. Maureen Elgersman Lee, Dr. Cassandra L. Newby-Alexander

Members Absent: Senator David W. Marsden, Delegate Ellen H. Campbell, Delegate Anne Ferrell Tata, Dr. Byron Cherry, Carl Edmonds, Joni Ivey, A. Scott Fleming, Julian Maxwell Hayter

notice of the Commission's purpose in order to ensure any member of the public who may be impacted by or have information pertinent to the purpose of the Commission is aware of the Commission.

Second, the Commission agreed to establish a subcommittee on reparations for the purpose of determining what forms of compensation or relief would be appropriate for any individual from whom a public institution of higher education purchased, expropriated, or otherwise took possession of property that was located within the boundaries of a community in which the majority of the residents are Black. The Commission noted that this subcommittee should begin by evaluating the forms of compensation or relief that are being provided by other entities in the Commonwealth and in other states in similar situations and by considering whether any forms of compensation or relief may be inappropriate.

Third, the Commission agreed to establish a subcommittee on research and analysis for the purpose of determining a methodology for performing any necessary research, performing any such necessary research and analysis, and considering whether any outside assistance may be needed to analyze or synthesize any data obtained from such research.

Finally, the Commission agreed to establish a subcommittee for the purpose of delineating the specific duties and assignments of each of the three subcommittees established above (the subcommittee on institutional outreach, the subcommittee on reparations, and the subcommittee on research and analysis). The Commission assigned the following members to this subcommittee: Senator Mamie E. Locke, Delegate Karen Keys-Gamarra, Delegate Jeion A. Ward, Dr. Maureen Elgersman Lee, and Dr. Cassandra L. Newby-Alexander.

The Commission unanimously agreed that this subcommittee would schedule a virtual meeting in the coming month to discuss and make recommendations on the duties and assignments of the other subcommittees.

For more information, see the [*Commission's website*](#) or contact the Division of Legislative Services staff:

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