

Maryland 250 Commission Land Acknowledgement Statement

The Maryland 250 Commission Executive Order directs the Commission to
“Acknowledge that the confiscation of Indigenous land and displacement of Indigenous people is central to the United States' origin story and recognize the persistence and contributions of these communities today.”

In recognition of this call to action, each meeting of the Maryland 250 Commission will open with a “land acknowledgement” recognizing the historical and contemporary presence of all tribes who maintain relationships with lands claimed by the State of Maryland. The following statement is based on one drafted by an elder of the Choptico Band of Indians, Piscataway Conoy Tribe, for the Maryland State Arts Council Land Acknowledgement Project:

We acknowledge the lands and waters now known as Maryland are the home of its first peoples: the Accohannock Indian Tribe, Assateague People's Tribe, Cedarville Band of Piscataway Indians, Choptico Band of Indians, Lenape Tribe, Nanticoke Tribe, Nause-Waiwash Band of Indians, Piscataway Conoy Tribe, Piscataway Indian Nation, Pocomoke Indian Nation, Susquehannock Indians, Youghiogheny River Band of Shawnee, and tribes in the Chesapeake watershed who have seemingly vanished since the coming of colonialism. We acknowledge that this land is now home to other tribal peoples living here in the diaspora. We acknowledge the forced removal of many from the lands and waterways that nurtured them as kin. We acknowledge the degradation that continues to be wrought on the land and waters in pursuit of resources. We acknowledge the right of the land and waterways to heal so that they can continue to provide food and medicine for all. We acknowledge that it is our collective obligation to pursue policies and practices that respect the land and waters so that our reciprocal relationship with them can be fully restored.