

SB 0035 (Senate Bill) Support March 12, 2026

March 10, 2026

From: Stephen J. Godfrey Ph.D.
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Home address: 2710 Hatteras Lane, Lusby, Maryland 20657

To: Senator Brian J Feldman, Chair
Senate Education, Energy and Environment Committee
2 West Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

To the Honorable Senator Brian J Feldman,

I write in support of SB0035 (sponsored by Senator Jackson) and its companion bill HB 0173 (sponsored by Delegate Allen). These bills would designate the Natural History Society of Maryland as the State's official Natural Science Museum.

I have known members of the senior staff (whom I think are and have always been volunteers) at the Natural History Society of Maryland for more than 25 years! Their individual and collective passion for the natural sciences is second to none. The breadth and number/frequency of public programs they host never ceases to amaze me. Honestly, I don't know how they do so much with virtually no funding.

I am surprised that Maryland does not already have an official Natural Sciences Museum, given the importance of collecting and preserving examples of the diversity of organisms that call Maryland home. Members of the Natural History Society are not content to just house collections...those collections form the basis of the majority of the public educational programs for which they are so well known! We cannot afford to neglect educating upcoming generations on the importance of our natural world. Our survival depends on it.

As a Ph.D. paleontologist and educator based at the Calvert Marine Museum in Solomons, Maryland, I have assisted the Natural History Society of Maryland, on a volunteer basis, with the development of some of their fossil-related exhibits. I have also spoken on many occasions to the enthusiastic members of their fossil club!

The designation as the State's official Natural Sciences Museum would help garner the support they need to continue to grow and preserve the hundreds of thousands of specimens highlighting Maryland's diverse and fascinating natural history.

Many thanks for your kind consideration.

Sincerely,



Stephen J. Godfrey