



MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND
WOMEN'S DEMOCRATIC CLUB

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Senate Bill SB0008 – General Provisions – State Song Repeal

Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee – March 11, 2021

SUPPORT

Thank you for this opportunity to submit written testimony concerning an important priority of the **Montgomery County Women's Democratic Club (WDC)** for the 2021 legislative session. WDC is one of the largest and most active Democratic Clubs in our county with hundreds of politically active women and men, including many elected officials.

WDC urges the passage of SB0008 – General Provisions – State Song Repeal. This bill will repeal Maryland's Confederate State song *Maryland! My Maryland!*.

Maryland is the only state in the country with a Confederate symbol for its State song, *Maryland! My Maryland!* - a symbol that is no different than flying the Confederate flag over the Statehouse. The lyrics to *Maryland! My Maryland!* glorify Maryland's shameful slave-holding history, including honoring former Governor Enoch Lewis who urged Maryland to secede from the Union and gave moral and material support to the Confederacy. *Maryland! My Maryland!* was written to protest Union Troops in Baltimore and Southern Confederate soldiers used it as a Civil War battle hymn. Maryland did not adopt *Maryland! My Maryland!* as our State song until 1939 – a time when Maryland was sadly among our nation's segregated "Jim Crow" states.

This past year has seen a long-overdue reckoning throughout our Country about our Confederate past and the power of its symbols to still foster hate. The recent insurrection and occupation of the Capitol, including the erection of a scaffold with a noose and numerous Confederate flags waving in the halls of Congress, have shone a harsh light on why symbols like our State song matter, and why the Legislature must make the repeal of *Maryland! My Maryland!* a priority this session.

We ask for your support for SB0008 and strongly urge a favorable Committee report.

Maryland must stop honoring the "Lost Cause" by repealing our Confederate State song, *Maryland! My Maryland!*, and sending a clear message that all lives matter in today's Maryland.

Respectfully,

Diana Conway
President