

**2024-03-28 HB 566 OAG (Support).pdf**

Uploaded by: Adam Spangler

Position: FAV

**CANDACE MCLAREN LANHAM**  
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*General Counsel*

**STATE OF MARYLAND**  
**OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL**

March 28, 2023

**TO:** The Honorable Brian Feldman  
Chair, Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

**FROM:** Tiffany Clark  
Chief Counsel, Legislative Affairs, Office of the Attorney General

**RE:** HB 566 – State and Local Government – Real Property – Confederate Naming Prohibited (Support)

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The Office of the Attorney General strongly supports passage of House Bill 566 (“HB 566”), Delegate Grossman’s legislation to prohibit any political subdivision from naming real property (e.g. streets, buildings, parks, or subdivisions) after any person who voluntarily served in the Confederate States of America. If enacted, proposed section 9-102 of the State and Local Government Article would provide that “[a] State entity or political subdivision of the State may not assign a Confederate name to real property owned by the State or political subdivision.”

Attorney General Anthony G. Brown, himself an Army veteran, has “long maintained that traitorous men who fought to preserve the institution of slavery and defend white supremacy do not deserve to be honored by our military, and it is long past time their names were removed from places of reverence,” such as military forts and institutions.<sup>1</sup> Similarly, here, Maryland State or political subdivisions should be precluded from lionizing Confederate soldiers and sympathizers by naming public properties after them.

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<sup>1</sup> Samuel Benson, Here are the possible new names for 9 Army bases that honored Confederates, POLITICO (Mar. 17, 2022), available online at: <https://www.politico.com/news/2022/03/17/confederate-army-bases-new-names-00018187> (last visited on Feb. 9, 2024).

In 2022, then-Congressman Brown noted, “I learned to fly helicopters at Ft. Rucker. I deployed to Iraq from Ft. Bragg, and I earned my jump wings at Ft. Benning. All these bases honored men who wouldn’t want me or other Black Americans serving in uniform, let alone in Congress.”<sup>2</sup> Similarly, Marylanders shouldn’t have to go about their daily business on streets or in buildings, parks, or subdivisions named after Confederate soldiers.

For the foregoing reasons, the Office of Attorney General urges the Health & Government Operations Committee to favorable report HB 566.

cc: The Honorable Brooke Grossman (Sponsor)

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<sup>2</sup> Equal Justice Initiative, Commission Recommends Changes for Army Bases Named for Confederate Leaders, EJI (Jun. 8, 2022), available online at <https://eji.org/news/commission-recommends-changes-for-army-bases-named-for-confederate-leaders/> (last visited Feb. 9, 2024).

# **HB566 Senate Testimony.pdf**

Uploaded by: Brooke Grossman

Position: FAV



**THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES**  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**HB0566: Commission on State and Local Government Real Property Bearing  
Confederate Names**

Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee  
March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2024: 1:00 PM

Mr. Chair, Madam Vice-Chair, and members of the committee for the record I am Delegate Brooke Grossman, and I am here to testify on House Bill 566. HB0566 would establish a state-wide commission that would research and identify county and state-owned streets, parks, and other publicly owned entities that bear Confederate names. The commission would consist of 24 members from each jurisdiction who are appointed by the Governor and an executive director who would provide administrative assistance. The commission will submit a report of their findings to the Governor and all 24 local jurisdictions by 2031. The commission itself will only be tasked with identifying public properties that bear Confederate names, it has no authority to rename a public property.

The state of Maryland would not be the first jurisdiction to pursue this naming prohibition. In 2021, the Department of Defense formed the Naming Commission to rename any of their assets associated with Confederate individuals. Aside from their military assets, the commission identified hundreds of other assets such as streets and buildings that were recommended to be renamed. Multiple local entities such as Loudoun County VA, the City of Alexandria, and Montgomery County have all begun the process of renaming their streets that are commemorative of Confederate leaders.

The commission's task would be reflective of Maryland's goal to be inclusive and ensure that our schools, streets, and parks are not commemorative of Confederate individuals. In many cases around the country, the naming of public properties in honor of Confederate individuals became popular decades after the Civil War as a backlash to the Civil Rights movement.

Maryland should ensure that the names of our public properties do not commemorate a cause or individuals who engaged in an insurrection to preserve their ability to maintain enslaved African Americans. The history of our country has a place in textbooks, museums, and national battlefields where context is provided in understanding who these individuals were. All Marylanders should live, work, and play in spaces that are welcoming and reflective of our shared values.

**Therefore, I ask for a favorable report on HB5566.**

# **UPDATED\_HB0566\_RealProperty\_Commission on Confeder**

Uploaded by: Jordan BaucumColbert

Position: FAV



## **POSITION STATEMENT**

**Bill:** HB 0566 Commission on State and Local Government – Real Property – Confederate Naming Prohibited Bearing Confederate Names

**Position:** Support

**Date:** March 28, 2024

**Contact:** Debra Borden, General Counsel

Jordan Baucum Colbert, Government Affairs Liaison

Dear Chair Senator Brian J. Feldman and Vice Chair Cheryl C. Kagan,

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (“M-NCPPC” or the “Commission”) initially voted to support amendments HB 0566. M-NCPPC supports the idea of a State and Local Government Commission to ensure renaming efforts are well researched and thought out. We therefore request that this committee give this bill a favorable vote. Given our expertise in this area, M-NCPPC welcomes friendly consultation with our Prince George’s and Montgomery Planning Departments as needed. We also encourage the State and Local Government Commission’s to consider our recommendations when considering implementation of this law.

**What this Bill Does.** As amended, this bill seeks to establish a Commission on State and Local Government Real Property – Confederate Naming Prohibited Bearing Confederate Names (State and Local Government Commission). The State and Local Government Commission is required to develop and implement a framework to identify real property bearing confederate names that is owned by the state or a political subdivision. It is also required to make recommendations regarding real property that should be renamed on or before October 1, 2031, and to report findings and recommendations.

**Dedication to Dismantling Systemic Racism.** M-NCPPC is committed to the goals of this Bill. M-NCPC is committed to confronting the legacy of racism and its ongoing effects and to using this equity lens in all our plans, policies, practices, and other work—including to ensure that staff understand and practice social justice in their hiring practices and work to dismantle their own



internalized biases. Montgomery Planning and Prince George’s Planning have a great deal of experience with street renaming efforts.

**Montgomery Planning:** Montgomery Planning worked at the behest of the Montgomery County Council to rename three streets in 2021 – these were three streets in Montgomery County named for Confederate soldiers that are now named after historic African American residents. In 2020, at the direction of the Montgomery County Council, Montgomery Planning undertook a review of county-owned and maintained streets and park facilities to identify those named after known Confederates. After over a year of research, three streets that had full name Confederate matches were renamed to honor local African American historical figures. It is a large undertaking involving: i) researching military rosters, pension records, census data, cemetery records, property and tax records, news articles, and other secondary sources; ii) cross-referencing data with street and park names; iii) working with the property owners along the streets to inform them of the process, receive input on new names, and provide support for changing of their address information in public records; and iv) coordination with police, fire and rescue, as well as county agencies regarding signage and mapping.

**Prince George’s Planning:** Prince George’s Planning also has experience with conducting research related to street renaming. There were multiple inquiries related to the process, but no formal submissions were made and processed. There is more work to be done and the Commission supports this effort, but experience has shown that it will certainly take more than three years to complete. In Prince George’s County the Planning Department served on the County’s Responsible Legacy Task Force a few years ago; below is a link to their final report - <https://pgccouncil.us/DocumentCenter/View/7510/RLTF-Final-Report>

**Clarify and Expand Language.** It is important to clearly define the connections to the “Confederacy” that must be researched as part of this undertaking. We would note that the “Confederate States of America” was not a sovereign state recognized by any government and was a group of American states in rebellion against federal authority for approximately four years. Montgomery County’s experience has demonstrated that references to the Confederacy often go well beyond names of military commanders and the recommended amendments in our position statement attempt to cover such scenarios.

In addition, technically many public streets are not “owned” by the political jurisdiction but have been dedicated to public use, so this language should be added. We would also offer an additional option for renaming to include commemorating the property at issue in honor of a non-Confederate of the same name, which some other jurisdictions (namely Alexandria, Virginia) have employed with some success. This option establishes the new honorific without the need to change physical addresses for the impacted property owners along the streets. We respectfully request this option be a part of the State and Local Government Commission’s discussion.

For these reasons, the Commission requests the Committee vote favorable on HB 0566.

# **HB566 Testimony 2024.pdf**

Uploaded by: Debi Jasen

Position: FWA

**House Bill 566 - Favorable with Amendment**  
**Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee**

Honorable Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee;

Please amend House Bill 566, regarding the establishment of a commission related to Confederate names, in such a way as to return it to its original wording.

There must be more commissions than there are members of the Senate at this point. Can we just stop naming things after white supremacists and change the names of things that are currently named after white supremacists? Why do we need to study it and talk about it forever before taking action? I mean, 2031??? Really???

And why should someone be paid \$80,000 a year for this? Is being the director of this sort of commission really a full-time job? If someone was getting paid \$80,000 a year, why would they want to do anything in a timely manner? I'm sure there are groups throughout the city and counties that could figure out which things have Confederate names, and pick up a dictionary to rename them. I'd do it for free.

Seriously. It's 2024. Can we stop accommodating Confederate apologists already?

Sincerely,

Debi Jasen

Pasadena (aka Pasabama, where some people still fly KKKonfederate flags), MD

# **2024 HB0566 Testimony Against 2024-03-28.pdf**

Uploaded by: Alan Lang

Position: UNF

Honorable Senators

I oppose HB0566.

I am against establishing a Commission to locate real property bearing Confederate names.

If you have to spend between \$80,000 and \$100,000 per year from 2026 through 2032 to locate these properties, the public must not be finding them that offensive. One would think that if citizens were so offended they would already be submitting the names of these buildings to their representatives. Why should it take 7 years to locate them?

I find it interesting that those who allegedly find anything related to the Confederacy to be so offensive that they continue to live in Maryland, a state that allowed slavery, or will touch money that has the pictures of slave owners on them (George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, and Andrew Jackson). Even the American flag should be repugnant to them since it flew over ships that brought slaves into this country.

With so many problems facing this state, why are you wasting as much as \$560,000 to find properties that many probably have never given a second thought about until pointed out by this committee.

What happens in 2033 when this commission has identified all the offensive properties? Which offensive group will be targeted next?

Perhaps the commission should be tasked with finding properties, statues, and paintings of prominent Democrats that supported slavery prior to the Civil War, or were linked to the Ku Klux Klan like Senator Byrd, or those that supported separate but equal segregation, or fought against civil rights legislation.

I believe we even have a current President who fought against the integration of schools while he was a young politician in Delaware. Based on the premise of this legislation, stating his name, or seeing his name in print should be just as offensive as seeing the Confederate names on some of our buildings.

Quit wasting your time and our money on this issue.

Please vote against HB0556

Alan Lang, District 31

242 Armstrong Lane  
Pasadena, MD 21122  
410.336.9745  
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**HB0566-OPPOSE.pdf**

Uploaded by: Linda Diefenbach

Position: UNF

HB0566-OPPOSE

Why is the Maryland legislature hoping to erase history?

Please OPPOSE this bill.

Linda Diefenbach  
Middletown, MD



# **Oppose HB 0566.pdf**

Uploaded by: Michael Vernon

Position: UNF

Oppose HB 0566

This is another attempt to white-wash American history. Remembering the good and the bad is important.

I strongly oppose this bill.

Michael Vernon

Crownsville, MD 21032

**HB0566Oppose.pdf**

Uploaded by: Peggy Williams

Position: UNF

HB0566      Oppose

Commission on State and Local Government Real Property Bearing Confederate Names

Dear Committee Members:

I oppose this bill. Not because I am a racist but because I believe we need to preserve our history – the good and bad, with the understanding that some past events should not be repeated. I believe erasing history has a slippery slope potential since this was a tactic used during the Cultural Revolution in China. Removing historical statues/names was one of the things Mao did.

<https://x.com/Simply4Truth/status/1771223130289127697?s=20>

Peggy Williams

Severna Park

D31

**Vote NO on HB 566.pdf**

Uploaded by: Stacy Pedersen

Position: UNF

To the Maryland House of Representatives:  
Vote NO on SB 566

More woke white-washing of names and erasing our history. Even if these historical figures are a negative part of our history, we should want to remember this, so that history doesn't repeat itself. Just like we do in our own lives, we don't erase our own individual history, we use the experience to better ourselves and to help others. Our gov't needs to focus on bigger problems.

Sincerely,  
Stacy Pedersen

**HB0566.pdf**

Uploaded by: Suzanne Price

Position: UNF

More CANCEL CULTURE, the same other testimony stands for changing the state song and erasing Columbus Day. STOP wasting money and please focus on INFRASTRUCTURE, crime and safety, and not this superfluous nonsense.

Say no to this waste of time, money and resources, HB0566

Suzanne Price  
AACo, MD

The LEFT is canceling our history and things they do not like. It's the Leftist Religion of Wokeness or Wokism and from many of our perspectives DUMB and ridiculous. LEAVE our HISTORY ALONE PLEASE.

MORE DUMB DEI, everything Woke will eventually go BROKE. In the past this behavior is classified as a CULTURAL GENOCIDE.

YOU CAN'T CANCEL REALITY AND HISTORY, YOU CAN TRY TO HIDE IT but cancel or erase NEVER. Do you know who else hid and destroyed history? Bolsheviks, Communists, Nazis, and other heinous groups of deranged people.