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Judicial Proceedings Committee
Executive Nominations Committee
Vice Chair, Rules Committee

THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Testimony

SB 448: Commission to Study African American Civil War Soldiers in Maryland

Good Afternoon Madam Chair Pena-Melnyk, Madam Vice Chair Cullison and members of the Health, Government and Operations Committee.

Senate Bill 448 would simply do what the title states, it would establish a *Commission to Study African American Civil War Soldiers in Maryland*.

During the Civil War, six Maryland USCT (United States Colored Troops) regiments mustered into service. This commission will study their muster locations, membership roster of names, location of service, position upon battlefields, and all distinguished honors of recognition. This USCT Regiment Study Commission would also provide recommendations for the funding, design, construction, and placement of an appropriate memorial dedicated to the Maryland USCT Regiments. From the above data, we can generate educational material for the state board of education to incorporate into our history studies, determine locations for memorials/ plaques and ultimately inspire young African Americans to achieve greatness in honor of those who sacrificed in service and life. Even though the USCT didn't fight in any battles in Maryland, they were instrumental to the Union army in the Petersburg/ Richmond areas, which ultimately contributed to the success of the Union Army. Also, Monocacy Junction in Frederick County was a major recruitment center for the USCT. Both free and enslaved people served in the USCT. Enslaved men were enlisted by their owners and freed upon enlistment. Within the Maryland USCT infantry regiments four soldiers earned the Medal of Honor, the highest military award. These men deserve to be recognized for their invaluable contribution.

Therefore, I urge the committee to give a favorable report on Senate Bill 448.