



PRESERVATION MARYLAND

January 18, 2024

Hon. Joseline A. Pena-Melnyk
Health and Government Operations Committee
House Office Building, 6 Bladen St.
Annapolis, Maryland

RE: HB133 FAVORABLE

Chairperson Pena-Melnyk,

On behalf of the staff and Board of Directors of Preservation Maryland and our thousands of statewide supporters, I thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony in **SUPPORT of HB133** – a piece of legislation that will establish a commission to explore, interpret, and commemorate the service of Maryland’s African American Civil War soldiers.

Preservation Maryland is the nonprofit, statewide voice for historic preservation that harnesses the power of historic places by revitalizing and reinvesting in communities, advocating, and building the historic trades workforce for the benefit of all Marylanders. (Learn more at: presmd.org)

The new commission envisioned by this legislation would be empaneled to study African American troops recruited from Maryland and to make specific recommendations regarding potential curriculum, memorials, and opportunities to increase awareness of the nearly 9,000 African American soldiers from Maryland who fought to preserve our nation during the American Civil War. We support this legislation as we believe its passage would bring deserving attention, preservation, and much overdue official recognition to this unique and inspiring aspect of our state’s rich history.

HB133 is an innovative piece of legislation, and we urge a favorable report.

Favorable

Sincerely,

Nicholas A. Redding, President & CEO