

Environmental & Transportation Committee

Subject: Support HB-1184 Preserving Snow Hill's Black History

As a Black voter and resident of Port Deposit in Cecil County for over 60 yrs, I understand the profound importance of preserving and honoring our history. I urge you to support HB-1184, a critical bill to protect Snow Hill, one of Maryland's earliest free Black communities.

Maryland has made commendable strides in recognizing Black history, yet Cecil County's contributions—particularly in Port Deposit—remain underrepresented. Snow Hill is a vital piece of that history, preserving the story of a thriving free Black community before the Civil War.

HB-1184 ensures this legacy is properly recognized and protected. By narrowing the project's scope, the bill allows the state to effectively allocate resources toward preserving Snow Hill's historical and archaeological significance, while the Bainbridge Development Corporation and Port Deposit work to preserve and restore the historic Tome School site. This streamlined approach increases the project's likelihood of success and ensures timely preservation.

Beyond Snow Hill, Port Deposit seeks to connect this site to a greater narrative of Black history, including the town's Underground Railroad connections, Freeman Hall where I attended 6 yrs. (a segregated Black primary school), and a church built nearly 300 years ago by those once enslaved. Also noteworthy is that I now attend Cokesbury U.M. since Howard Chapel in Port, where I used to go was condemned around 1965. These stories deserve to be told, and HB-1184 is a critical step in ensuring they are not lost to time.

Please vote YES on HB-1184 to elevate Maryland's Black history and strengthen heritage preservation efforts in Cecil County.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Alice Banks Clark

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Alice Banks Clark". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the typed name.