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Chair
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Rules and Executive
Nominations Committee



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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

State Designations – State Mineral– Chromite (State Mineral Act) (HB 411)

Testimony of Delegate Marc Korman-Favorable

Thank you, Madame Chair, Madame Vice-Chair, and members of the Health and Government Operations Committee. I come before you today to discuss the State Mineral Act (HB 411). I know this committee has many weightier matters to deal with, but, as you know, these state symbols are important tools to educate Marylanders about the history and importance of different aspects of our state. This bill, brought to me by a constituent, would establish Chromite as the official mineral of the state of Maryland. Chromite has a rich composition and a rich history attached to our state.

The dark metal was first discovered in the United States in 1808 by Issac Tyson Jr, in Bare Hills, Baltimore County. For decades, the Baltimore area exported a majority of the world's chromite through Fells Point. The abundance of the mineral led Tyson Jr to create the nation's first chromium plant, Baltimore Chrome Works in Fells Point. This plant would go on to dominate the chrome industry, receiving an induction to the National Mining Hall of Fame and Museum in 1996.¹

Today, Chromite is found in the counties of Baltimore, Carroll, Cecil, Harford, Howard, Montgomery, and Baltimore City. There were 46 historic mines located within mining districts across the state. Some of the most prominent districts include the Soldiers Delight Mining District in Owings Mills, the Jarrettsville-Dublin Mining District in Jarrettsville, the Bare Hill District in Baltimore County, and the State Line Maryland Mining District in Cecil County.²

Chromite serves as the inspiration for many sights and areas around the state, including Chrome Hill in Harford County and Chrome Mine Road in Montgomery County. I regret that I could not find any Prince George's or Anne Arundel County examples, Madame Chair.

The material chromium is extracted from Chromite and used as a material in many industries, including metallurgy, paint manufacturing, and paper production.

The State Mineral Act will recognize the significance and connection of Chromite to Maryland. A majority of states already have an official mineral, including Delaware (Sillimanite). State minerals, like other natural symbols, serve as a testament to a state's beauty, history, and identity. As a state with a vibrant mining history and a modern commitment to environmental efforts, Maryland's essence is represented wholly through Chromite.

I ask for a favorable report.

¹ Johnson, Jonny. "Maryland's Choate Chromite Mine" 2017 Mining History Journal, 2017.
<https://www.mininghistoryassociation.org/Journal/MHJ-v24-2017-Johnsson.pdf>

² <https://pubs.usgs.gov/publication/b1082K>