

Letter of Support for HB0077 Commission to Study African American Civil War Sailors in Maryland

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The Honorable Joseline A. Pena-Melnyk
Health and Government Operations Committee
240 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Chairperson Pena-Melnyk and Members of the Committee,

We support the proposed legislation that seeks to establish the Commission to Study African American Civil War Sailors in Maryland. As the Legislative Director of the Maryland Veterans Chamber of Commerce, I advocate for policies that honor our history and promote the recognition of the contributions made by African American sailors who bravely fought for the Union Navy during the Civil War.

The establishment of this Commission is a crucial step in acknowledging the significant role African American sailors played in our nation's history. By studying their history, the Commission will shed light on their contributions and ensure that their legacy is preserved for future generations. Furthermore, the Commission's task to make recommendations regarding the funding, design, construction, and location of an appropriate memorial dedicated to these sailors will serve as a lasting tribute to their bravery and sacrifice.

Moreover, the lack of comprehensive recognition for African American Civil War sailors in Maryland is a gap that must be addressed. The absence of such recognition not only overlooks their valor but also deprives our community of an important aspect of our shared heritage. Establishing this memorial will provide a space for education, reflection, and appreciation of the diverse history that shapes our state.

We urge the committee to favorably consider this legislation and ensure that the Commission's findings. This initiative will honor the past while enriching the cultural and historical fabric of Maryland.

Sincerely,

Matthew Kilbane



Legislative Director, Maryland Veterans Chamber of Commerce