



THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**HB0752: Commission on State and Local Government Real Property Bearing
Confederate Names
Health and Government Operations
March 4th, 2025: 1:00 PM**

Madam Chair, Madam Vice-Chair, and honorable members of the committee thank you so much for the opportunity to speak today. For the record I am Delegate Matt Schindler, and I am here to testify on House Bill 752. HB752 would establish a state-wide commission that would research and identify county and state-owned streets, parks, and other publicly owned entities that bear Confederate names. The commission would consist of 24 members, one from each jurisdiction who are appointed by the Governor and an executive director who would provide administrative assistance. The commission will submit a report of their findings to the Governor and all 24 local jurisdictions by 2032. The commission itself will only be tasked with identifying public properties that bear Confederate names, it has no authority to rename public property.

The state of Maryland would not be the first jurisdiction to pursue such an initiative. In 2021, the Department of Defense formed the Naming Commission to rename any of their assets associated with Confederate individuals. Aside from their military assets, the commission identified hundreds of other assets such as streets and buildings that were recommended to be renamed. Multiple local entities such as Loudon County VA, the City of Alexandria, and Montgomery County have all begun the process of renaming their streets that are commemorative of Confederate leaders.

The commission's task would be reflective of Maryland's goal to be inclusive and ensure that our schools, streets, and parks are not commemorative of Confederate individuals. In many cases around the country, the naming of public properties in honor of Confederate individuals became popular decades after the Civil War as a backlash to the Civil Rights movement. The history of our country has a place in textbooks, museums, and national battlefields where context is provided in understanding who these individuals were. That place is not our state roads and buildings.

What you have in front of you is the amended, workshopped version of a bill that passed through the house last year. The bill does carry a short-term fiscal note, which is the salary for one employee, an executive director to manage this effort. While this bill was previously introduced by former Delegate Grossman, I think that this bill is very important to re-visit, especially in the current climate where it's important to let our citizens know that Maryland remains committed to being an inclusive place to live for all our citizens.

Whether these streets / buildings in our state were named in Civil rights era defiance, or simply due to proximity to significant Civil War sites with no ill-intent, All Marylanders should live, work, and play in spaces that are welcoming and reflective of our shared values.

Therefore, I ask for a favorable report on HB752.