

To the Honorable Chairs Senator Feldman and Delegate Wells.

My name is Dr. Adrien Malick and I am a Trustee, Curator, and a Co-Founder of the Fossil Club of the Natural History Society of Maryland – the NHSM. I am writing in support of SB 0135 (sponsored by Senator Bailey) and HB 0097 (sponsored by Delegate Morgan) to make *Otodus megalodon* the Maryland State Shark.

*Otodus megalodon* was the apex predator of the Miocene Epoch. This shark could be 50 plus feet long with a mouthful of serrated teeth up to 6 inches and a bite stronger than a *Tyrannosaurus rex*. The Miocene time period from about 23 to 5 million years ago has several exposures in Maryland, including the Calvert Cliffs area of Calvert County. Collecting fossil shark teeth draws countless visitors to Calvert Cliffs and finding a “MEG” is on the bucket list of both amateur and professional collectors. This is a boon to public access locations including the Flag Ponds Nature Reserve and Calvert Cliffs State Park, and the economic ripple effects are felt throughout the region.

Looking for and finding sharks teeth is the gateway drug to a lifetime of exploring the outdoors, understanding geologic time, learning about adaptation and change, and understanding our personal role in the ecology of Maryland. It is not surprising that people love the experience of finding sharks teeth and make a special effort to keep the Bay and its shoreline clean. For many of us this is a legal and lifelong addiction. Making the *Otodus megalodon* the Maryland State Shark will go a long way to promoting this aspect of Maryland tourism and providing another foothold for education and appreciation of the Chesapeake Bay and our natural resources.

Thank you for your time and the opportunity to share my support.

Adrien Malick, Ph.D.