

SB 0035 (Senate Bill) Support

Hearings; March 12, 2026

HB 0173 (House Bill) Support

March 17, 2026

Adrien Malick, Ph.D.

Trustee, Paleontology Curator, and Co-Founder of the Fossil Club of the Natural History Society of MD

10817 Acme Ave., Granite, MD 21163

Senator Brian J Feldman, Chair

Senate Education, Energy and Environment Committee

2 West Miller Senate Office Building

Annapolis, MD 21401

Delegate Melissa Wells, Chair

House Government, Labor and Elections Committee

145 Lowe House Office Building

Annapolis, MD 21401

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 write in support of SB0035 (sponsored by Senator Jackson) and its companion bill HB 0173 (sponsored by Delegate Allen). These bills would designate the Natural History Society of Maryland (NHSM) as the State’s official natural sciences museum.

I strongly support this action because the NHSM is critical to the care and protection of Maryland's natural science collections and to the revitalization of Overlea and surrounding communities. We are facing a crisis in Maryland. As collectors retire or pass away, irreplaceable

collections of natural science materials need a home so they remain available for research and education and are not discarded into a landfill. Ongoing State support is vital in this endeavor.

I am a life-long fossil collector and retired scientist. Working closely with NHSM enables me to experience and share two absolute thrills – finding fossils and then putting them in the hands of children. In order to reach as many students as possible, the NHSM has created the Fossils in Classrooms Program. This program is unique to the NHSM and distinctive in that it trains and equips teachers with accessible paleontological content while placing authentic fossil specimens directly into students' hands. Teacher's comments range from:

- “We would not have had the funding to support such a wonderful resource”
- “What a fantastic resource for our students without vision! We use real objects whenever we can to enhance the connection and real meaning for our students.”
- “This kit is an essential accompaniment to our science unit. Our school has limited funding compared with other city schools and our students are at-risk. Our kids would be so excited to use this.”

The Fossils in Classrooms program utilizes the collections of NHSM and its members. In February of 2026 we provided over 10,500 fossils to Baltimore County Public Schools to support the Stream Doctors program in all 371 3rd grade classrooms. NHSM donated 34 Fossil Kits to Maryland Educators as part of our participation in the Maryland Association for Environmental and Outdoor Education (MAEOE) conference in February, and we are currently building kits to be distributed during a Teacher Day at the Museum. This enhances the education experience of thousands of kids and will spark life-long interests in fossils, evolution, nature, climate change and a host of other topics.

NHSM attracts passionate experts who utilize the collections and make themselves available as curators, mentors and as invaluable leaders of trips, tours and hands-on activities. These unique experiences include wild edible walks, moth nights, and finding fossils - in the buildings of Baltimore, in quarries, and on the shores of the Chesapeake Bay. Outdoor experiences are often led by experts in their fields, and it is not unusual to be discussing the land forms, the paleontology, the current ecology, and referencing our collections to identify the birds, mushrooms, plants, and animals.

Your approval of NHSM as the State Natural Sciences Museum will help provide a desperately needed collections facility for the state's irreplaceable natural science collections, create a central location for natural science education and research, expand science literacy in Maryland, and offer an economic engine for the community. A central location will foster collaboration between individuals and organizations that don't usually have the opportunity to connect with

one another. These collections cannot be lost to landfills. State support is critical to these activities.

Maryland is behind and does not yet have an official state natural sciences museum. The Natural History Society of Maryland has been filling that role for nearly a century. Now is the time to make NHSM an official state museum to protect irreplaceable collections for research and educate people about Maryland's important role in our planet's history. Your action will support future mentors, programs, and opportunities for the citizens of Maryland.

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

Sincerely,

Adrien Malick, Ph.D.

Natural History Society of Maryland Trustee, Curator, and Fossil Club Co-Founder