

Testimony for Senate Bill 191

State Designation – State Song – “The Heart of Maryland”

Thank you Senators for your time. I am here to testify on behalf of Senate Bill 191.

So like everyone does these days, I asked AI ...Why do we need a State Song? The answer ...States adopt an official song primarily to evoke a sense of **cultural heritage, community unity, and state pride.**

Now I totally agree with this statement, and Jayla’s song checks all those boxes. However, what AI does not include in its summary, is the impact a song like this has on each of **us** when we hear or sing it aloud!

As a physician with a background in neuroscience, I would like to say that Jayla’s song has the capacity to lower our stress hormones and raise those body chemicals that act to calm us, or make us feel challenged...all while increasing our feelings of trust.

And no matter our race, ethnicity, or cultural background, the words of **this** song...act to connect each of us...not only to our great state...but also to one another!

Music is universally beneficial to all, and a song like *The Heart of Maryland*, acts as a powerful tool to create positive emotions about ourselves and our State.

When we hear the melody and words of **this** song, its poignant meaning and powerful inclusivity has the capacity to slow our heart rate, boost our mood, improve our memory and focus, lower our blood pressure, and foster greater social connection. Essentially, this song serves to make our entire bodies healthier...all the while uniting us as Marylanders.

So if feeling lonely, sing “*Together we Stand in the Heart of this Land*”....

Or if feeling anxious hum the words, “*We’ve weathered time, we’ve stood as one, Creating hope with every sun.*”

Jayla wanted to write the song that would **unify** all Marylanders, and I want to add, that...based upon science...her song does just that.

Senators, please vote yes and adopt *The Heart of Maryland* as our official State Song.