

## **Written Testimony in Support of House Bill 97 State Designations – State Shark – Megalodon**

Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Harper Coale, I am 11 years old, and I live in Maryland. I am writing to respectfully ask you to support House Bill 97, which would designate the megalodon as Maryland's official State shark.

I think the megalodon is the perfect shark to represent Maryland. Even though it lived millions of years ago, its fossils—especially its huge teeth—are still found in many parts of our state, including along the Calvert Cliffs and in several counties across Maryland. This means Maryland is one of the best places in the world to learn about these amazing prehistoric animals. Many people, including kids like me, enjoy searching for fossilized shark teeth along the Bay and learning about the creatures that once lived here.

The megalodon was the largest shark that ever lived and one of the most powerful predators in Earth's history. Learning about it helps students understand science, paleontology, and the natural history of our state. Designating the megalodon as the State shark would highlight Maryland's unique fossil heritage and encourage more people—especially young people—to explore museums, beaches, and science.

Maryland already has many official state symbols that represent our history and environment. Adding the megalodon would celebrate the incredible prehistoric past of our region and the scientific discoveries that continue to happen here today.

Thank you for taking the time to consider my testimony and for your work serving the people of Maryland.

Respectfully submitted,

**Harper Coale**

Age 11

Maryland Resident