

SB 0035 (Senate Bill) Support

Hearings: March 12, 2026

HB 0173 (House Bill) .Support

March 17, 2026

Charles A. Davis, M. Sci.
Trustee Emeritus, and Botany Curator of The Natural History Society of MD
1510 Bellona Avenue, Lutherville MD 21093

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,

I'm Charles Davis, Trustee Emeritus at the Natural History Society of Maryland. I'm here to support SB0035 and HB 0173. I have been a volunteer at The Natural History Society for 40 years. I'm going to speak briefly about part of the museum most people never know about.

A museum consists of two parts. Firstly, there's the **outer** museum. That's the museum you experience when you visit. That outer museum is where samples of collections are displayed and their stories interpreted.

And then there's the **inner** museum, where collections are housed, organized, cared for, and studied. These collections-of-the-past contain irreplaceable information.

The collections are studied to answer important questions about medicine, disease, biotechnology, environmental management, conservation and wildlife studies, climate, agriculture, fisheries, pests, minerals, culture, recreation, human history, and education. The research findings from the inner museum provide the information and material for the outer museum.



These Senate and House bills benefit the inner museum and helps to address an issue that the State and the Natural History Society of Maryland have been grappling with for 97 years:

Because Maryland doesn't have a state-designated repository, many types of natural science collections--like this sample from one person's collection of 17,000 butterflies and moths—often are lost and abandoned. We were able to obtain this one, but only at the last minute—because at the end-of-ones-life things like these personal collections are the items that executors and relatives say, “Well, what are we going to do with this?” And because we don't have a prominent state-designated repository, these amazing collections of often end up in landfills—and thereby lost to all their potential societal values.

The state designation will increase our visibility and will increase the likelihood that collections like these—and the information they contain—are conserved to become part of Maryland's natural heritage.

These are some of the benefits of the Senate Bill 0035 and House Bill 0173.