



PRESERVATION MARYLAND

February 17, 2026

Hon. Melissa Wells
Government, Labor, and Elections Committee
145 Lowe House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland

RE: HB0170 FAVORABLE

Chairperson Wells,

On behalf of the staff and Board of Directors of Preservation Maryland and our thousands of statewide supporters, I thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony in **SUPPORT of HB0170** – a piece of legislation that will establish the Commission to Study African American Civil War Sailors in Maryland.

Preservation Maryland is the nonprofit, statewide voice for historic preservation that harnesses the power of historic places by revitalizing and reinvesting in communities, advocating, and building the historic trades workforce for the benefit of all Marylanders. (Learn more at: presmd.org)

This bill will establish the Commission to Study African American Civil War Sailors in Maryland and require the Commission to study the history of the African American sailors who fought for the Union Navy. It will also require the Commission to make certain recommendations regarding the funding, design, construction, and location of an appropriate memorial dedicated to African American Civil War sailors and require the Commission to report its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly by December 1, 2026. We support this legislation as we believe its passage would support the preservation of the history of African American Civil War Sailors.

HB0170 is an important piece of legislation, and we urge a favorable report.

Favorable

Sincerely,

Nicholas A. Redding, President & CEO