

The Honorable Melissa Wells  
Chair: Government, Labor, and Elections Committee  
House of Delegates, Room 145  
6 Bladen Street  
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Chair Wells, Vice-Chair Kerr, and Members of the Committee:

I am writing to express my support for legislation designating *Otodus megalodon*, commonly known as the megalodon, as the Maryland state shark.

I am currently completing a Master of Science degree in palaeobiology at the University of Bristol, in the United Kingdom. My passion for understanding this unbelievable creature began during my undergraduate degree at St. Mary's College of Maryland, where I researched megalodon teeth for my undergraduate thesis. During this time, I was regularly scouring the beaches of Calvert Cliffs in search of megalodon teeth.

Though this species has been lost to time, its public interest rivals Earth's most iconic predators, such as the great white shark and the dinosaur *Tyrannosaurus rex*. Designating the megalodon as Maryland's state shark presents an opportunity to stand out among the other states and promote tourism and celebrate one of the most incredible fossil collecting locations on the planet, the Calvert Cliffs, as well as the nearby gem, the Calvert Marine Museum.

I respectfully ask that you support this legislation.

Thank you for your service to my beloved home state.

Sincerely,  
J. Luke Schwenk

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "J. Luke Schwenk". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.