

SB 0035 (Senate Bill) Support

Hearings; March 12, 2026

HB 0173 (House Bill) Support

March 17, 2026

Adrien Malick, Ph.D.

Trustee, Paleontology Curator, and Co-Founder of the Fossil Club of the Natural History Society of MD

10817 Acme Ave., Granite, MD 21163

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 write in support of SB0035 (sponsored by Senator Jackson) and its companion bill HB 0173 (sponsored by Delegate Allen). These bills would designate the Natural History Society of Maryland (NHSM) as the State's official natural science museum.

I strongly support this action because the NHSM is critical to the care and protection of Maryland's natural history collections and to the revitalization of the Overlea, Parkville and Hillendale communities. We are facing a crisis in Maryland. As collectors retire or pass away, irreplaceable collections of natural science materials need a home so they remain available for research and education and are not discarded into a landfill. Ongoing State support is vital in this endeavor.

I am a retired scientist and life-long fossil collector. Working closely with NHSM enables me to experience and share two absolute thrills – finding fossils and then putting them in the hands of children. In order to reach as many students as possible, the NHSM has created the Fossils in Classrooms Program. This program is unique to the NHSM and distinctive in that it trains and equips teachers with accessible paleontological content

while placing authentic fossil specimens directly into students' hands. Teacher's comments range from:

- "We would not have had the funding to support such a wonderful resource"
- "What a fantastic resource for our students without vision! We use real objects whenever we can to enhance the connection and real meaning for our students."
- "This kit is an essential accompaniment to our science unit. Our school has limited funding compared with other city schools and our students are at-risk. Our kids would be so excited to use this."

In February alone NHSM delivered over 10,500 fossils for all 371 Baltimore County 3rd grade classrooms and 35 large kits of fossils to Maryland Outdoor Educators. This program enhances the classroom experience of hundreds of Maryland teachers and can spark life-long interests in fossils, evolution, nature, and a host of other topics.

NHSM attracts passionate experts who make themselves available as curators, mentors and as invaluable leaders of trips, tours and hands-on activities. These unique experiences include wild edible walks, moth nights, and finding fossils - in the buildings of Baltimore, quarries, and on the shores of the Chesapeake Bay. Outdoor experiences are often led by experts in their fields, and it is not unusual to be discussing the land forms, the paleontology, the current ecology, and referencing our collections to identify the birds, mushrooms, plants, and animals.

Your approval of a State Museum will help provide a desperately needed collections facility for the state's irreplaceable natural history collections, create a central location for natural science education and research, expand science literacy in Maryland, and offer an economic engine for the community. A central location will foster collaboration between individuals and organizations that don't usually have the opportunity to connect with one another. These collections cannot be lost to landfills. State support is critical to these activities.

Maryland does not yet have a state natural history museum. The Natural History Society of Maryland has been filling that role for nearly a century. Now is the time to make NHSM an official museum to protect irreplaceable collections for research and educate people about Maryland's important role in our planet's history.

Thank you for your time and the opportunity to share my support.

Sincerely,

Adrien Malick, Ph.D.

Natural History Society of Maryland Trustee, Curator, and Fossil Club Co-Founder

SB 0035 (Senate Bill) Support
HB 0173 (House Bill) Support

March 12, 2026
March 17, 2026

Carly Redett

Specialist II, Environmental Research Group, LLC

6049 Falls Rd Baltimore, MD 21209

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 write in support of SB0035 (sponsored by Senator Jackson) and its companion bill HB 0173 (sponsored by Delegate Allen). These bills would designate the Natural History Society of Maryland as the State's official natural science museum.

I strongly support this action because NHSM plays a vital role in revitalizing the Overlea, Parkville, and Hillendale communities while safeguarding Maryland's natural history collections for future generations. This investment supports education, inclusion, and long-term community well-being.

I work for an environmental consulting company and have had the privilege of visiting the NHSM firsthand. I was able to see all the impactful work they do to preserve Maryland's natural history and create a safe space for Marylanders to learn. As somebody who cares deeply about protecting natural resources, I believe the NHSM is crucial in educating the next generation of environmental stewards.

When I visited the museum, I felt very welcomed by the staff. Everyone I interacted with was knowledgeable, helpful, and clearly passionate about their work and about Maryland's natural history. That enthusiasm was evident throughout the museum and reflected a deep commitment to education and public engagement.

After visiting the museum, it's clear to me that NHSM is uniquely positioned to be designated as the State Museum. As the primary steward of the state's natural collections, it is a well-deserved designation. NHSM preserves and shares valuable collections in a way that helps Marylanders

better understand our natural heritage, while also inspiring young people to explore interests the natural sciences. A central location will allow NHSM to expand their reach and continue strengthening the communities they serve.

I strongly support these bills because, based on my experience visiting NHSM, it is already fulfilling the role of Maryland's natural history museum through education, stewardship, and community engagement. Making this support official will help protect irreplaceable collections and ensure more Marylanders can learn from and be inspired by our state's natural heritage.

Thank you for your time and the opportunity to share my support.

Sincerely,

Carly Redett

Specialist II

Environmental Research Group, LLC



3/4/2026

SB 0035 (Senate Bill)	Support	March 12, 2026
HB 0173 (House Bill)	Support	March 17, 2026

To Senator Brian J Feldman, Delegate Melissa Wells,

I represent **Haven Coworking** and write in strong support of SB0035 and its companion bill HB 0173. These bills would designate the Natural History Society of Maryland as the State's official natural science museum. As a group that has invested over \$3M in our building across the street it would mean a lot to see the museum grow.

Maryland does not have a state natural history museum. The Natural History Society of Maryland has been filling this role for nearly a century. Now is the time to make NHSM an official Maryland museum to protect irreplaceable collections for research and educate people about Maryland's important role in our planet's history.

NHSM has served as a trusted steward of Maryland's natural heritage, preserving collections, providing educational programming, and connecting communities to the rich biodiversity of our region. Official state recognition would strengthen these efforts, expand opportunities for public engagement, and help ensure the long-term preservation of Maryland's natural history resources.

The Natural History Society of Maryland resides in the Overlea Community as does my business and is an integral partner to our successful community development and revitalization efforts. My business strongly supports this name change.

Sincerely,

Austin Carroll Managing Member

Haven Coworking

6809 Belair Road, Baltimore MD

SB 0035 March 12, 2026

HB 0173 March 17, 2026

Donald L. Lofgren PhD

Trustee, Natural History Society of Maryland

313 Broadmoor Road, Baltimore, MD 21212

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 Love House Office Building

Annapolis, MD 21401

To the Honorable Chairs Senator Feldman and Delegate Wells,

I write in support of SB0035 (sponsored by Senator Jackson) and its companion bill HB 0173 (sponsored by Delegate Allen). These bills would designate the Natural History Society of Maryland (NHSM) as the State's official natural history museum.

I strongly support this action because it is critical to the educational needs of Maryland residents and it insures that collections that document the extant and extinct life of the Maryland and nearby regions will be preserved in perpetuity.

I'm a vertebrate paleontologist who after a long career as the director of a paleontology museum in California retired to Baltimore and joined the board of the NHSM (January 2025). I did so because I was amazed with the depth and scope of their outreach programs

and their efforts to preserve irreplaceable natural history collections that would have been lost forever. I'm excited to support the drive to designate the NHSM as Maryland's official natural history museum.

The staff, volunteers, and trustees make the NHSM a special institution. Established over 100 years, it has successfully grown in scientific stature and in its ability to serve the public on limited resources because of the passion and dedication of these individuals. Many volunteers are professionals in their fields who serve as curators of NHSM collections that match their expertise. Only the best museums attract volunteer talent like that.

A state's natural history museum is a place where priceless collections of extant and extinct biota are preserved for posterity. Collections are expensive to house and maintain but if this is not done scientific data is lost forever. Certain state & federal agencies and many serious private collectors will eventually need a permanent repository for their natural history collections. The NHSM would be that place for Maryland.

Maryland currently does not have a state natural history museum and the NHSM is ready to accept that role. This would be major step in the evolution of the NHSM in its drive to develop into a nationally renowned scientific institution.

Thank you for your time and the opportunity to share my support of the bill.

Cordially,

Donald Lofgren PhD, Trustee of the Natural History Society of Maryland, and Director Emeritus of the Raymond M. Alf Museum of Paleontology.

SB 0035 (Senate Bill) Support March 12, 2026

HB 0173 (House Bill) Support March 17, 2026

Mary R. Triandafilou
808 S. Sharp St.
Baltimore, MD 21230

Senator Bill Ferguson
H-107 State House
100 State Circle
Annapolis, MD 21401

Delegate Luke Clippinger
362 Taylor House Office Building
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

To the Honorable Senator Ferguson and Delegate Clippinger,
I write in support of SB0035 (sponsored by Senator Jackson) and its companion bill HB 0173 (sponsored by Delegate Allen). These bills would designate the Natural History Society of Maryland as the State's official natural science museum.

Our family has recently discovered this fantastic institution and are amazed at the tremendous collection of specimens that highlight Maryland's diverse and fascinating natural history. Their staff and volunteers are experts in their fields and passionate about our state, and they are involved in a wide variety of research and educational activities. Their offering of hundreds of programs every year cover Maryland's natural history in every aspect. Their offering of clubs that specialize in various aspects of the natural world is unbelievable. Even more appealing to our family, including grandchildren of school age, is the warm and welcoming atmosphere in the building. Children are learning and having a ball in activities that will stay with them all their lives.

This institution fulfills the role as the central repository for innumerable valuable collections that must be preserved. It is unconscionable that Maryland does not have a state natural history museum. Your approval will provide a collections facility for the state's irreplaceable natural history collections, creating a central location for natural science education and research. It will expand science literacy in Maryland, and offer an economic engine for the community.

The Natural History Society of Maryland has been filling that role for nearly a century. Now is the time to make NHSM an official museum to protect irreplaceable collections for research and to educate people about Maryland's important role in our planet's history.

Thank you for your time and the opportunity to share my support.

Sincerely,

Mary R. Triandafilou



EMPOWER PEOPLE | STRENGTHEN FAMILIES | BUILD COMMUNITY & TRUST

The EPICENTER

SB 0035 (Senate Bill) – Support
March 12, 2026

HB 0173 (House Bill) – Support
March 17, 2026

Karson Langenfelder
Chief Growth and Operations Officer
The EPICENTER
1918 Pulaski Highway
Edgewood, MD 21040

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

Dear Chair Feldman and Chair Wells,

I write in strong support of SB 0035, sponsored by Senator Jackson, and its companion bill HB 0173, sponsored by Delegate Allen. These bills would designate the Natural History Society of Maryland as the State's official natural science museum.

I support this legislation because Maryland deserves a formally recognized institution dedicated to preserving our natural heritage, advancing science literacy, and serving as a central hub for research, education, and community engagement.

As the Chief Growth and Operations Officer of The EPICENTER, a nonprofit organization serving families and neighbors across Harford and Baltimore Counties, I have seen firsthand how place based institutions strengthen communities. Our work focuses on empowering people, strengthening families, and building community through youth programs, health and wellness initiatives, life skills training, and recovery support. Institutions like the Natural History Society of Maryland play a complementary role by inspiring curiosity, lifelong learning, and environmental stewardship among the very communities we serve.

The Natural History Society of Maryland is a unique and invaluable asset to our state. Its extensive collections, knowledgeable staff and volunteers, and wide range of educational programs make it a vital resource for students, researchers, and families. Through lectures, field experiences, exhibits, and hands-on learning opportunities, the Society fosters a deeper understanding of Maryland's diverse ecosystems and natural history. It also serves as an anchor for community revitalization efforts in the Overlea, Parkville, and Hillendale areas.

Designating the Natural History Society of Maryland as the official state natural science museum would formally recognize the role it has long fulfilled. It would provide stability and visibility for the preservation of irreplaceable collections, expand opportunities for collaboration with schools and community organizations, and strengthen Maryland commitment to science education. An official designation will also support regional economic development and position Maryland as a leader in conservation and public engagement in the natural sciences.

Maryland currently does not have an officially designated state natural history museum. The Natural History Society of Maryland has effectively served in that capacity for decades. Formal recognition is both appropriate and overdue.

Thank you for your leadership and for the opportunity to share my support for these important bills.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'K. Langenfelder', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Karson Langenfelder
Chief Growth and Operations Officer



Maryland Forestry Foundation
124 South Street #3
Annapolis, MD 21401

Phone : 301-717-1579
Website : www.marylandforestryfoundation.org

March 2, 2026

Support for SB 0035 and HB 0173

GARY G. ALLEN
President

Vice President for
Development

SANDRA SPARKS
Vice President for
Communications

DAWN BALINSKI
Treasurer

Secretary

Directors
JIM BARDSLEY
MEGAN CARR
CHRISTINE CONN
GLENN FERENCIAK
ANNE HAIRSTON-STRANG
MIKE HUNNINGHAKE
WAYNE LUCAS
JOLI A. MCCATHRAN
BILL REES
JOHN R SMITHMEYER

Honorable Chairs Senator Feldman and Delegate Wells,

I write in support of SB 0035, sponsored by Senator Jackson, and its companion bill HB 0173, sponsored by Delegate Allen. These bills would designate the Natural History Society of Maryland (NIISM) as the State's official natural science museum. I strongly support this action. NHSM plays a vital role in preserving Maryland's natural history.

My experiences with NHSM, including membership and participation in its ongoing work, have shown me the wealth of knowledge and resources it provides. Their extensive collection of specimens, to which I've contributed, highlights Maryland's diverse ecosystems.

What makes NHSM special is its dedicated staff and volunteers, who are not only experts in their respective fields but also passionate advocates for our state's natural heritage.

Designating NHSM as the official state museum would establish a central repository for our irreplaceable natural history collections, enhance educational opportunities, and inspire future generations to pursue interests in natural sciences, ultimately benefiting the entire community.

Maryland does not currently have a state natural history museum, but NHSM has been fulfilling that role for nearly a century. Now is the time to formalize this designation to protect vital collections and educate our citizens about Maryland's significant contributions to the natural world.

I urge you to support this important and timely legislation.

Sincerely,

The Maryland Forestry Foundation is recognized by the IRS as a 501(c)3 non-profit organization.
Donations to the Foundation are tax deductible as allowed by law.

HB 1073 Support

March 17, 2026

Gina Foringer
President/CEO Environmental Research Group, LLC
5700 Ridgedale Road
Baltimore, MD 21209

Delegate Melissa Wells, Chair
House Government, Labor and Elections Committee
145 Lowe House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

To the Honorable Chair Delegate Wells,

I write in support of SB0035 (sponsored by Senator Jackson) and its companion bill HB 0173 (sponsored by Delegate Allen). These bills would designate the Natural History Society of Maryland as the State's official natural science museum.

NHSM is critical to the revitalization of the Overlea, Parkville and Hillendale communities and the care and protection of Maryland's natural history collections.

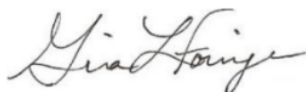
As the owner of an environmental consulting firm, I love the Natural History Society of Maryland and have worked with the staff on public engagement activities outside of the museum. They have hundreds of thousands of fascinating specimens highlighting Maryland's diverse and fascinating natural history, with more added all the time.

Their staff and volunteers are experts in their fields and passionate about our state, and they are involved in a wide variety of research and educational activities. They offer so many programs every year including in-person lectures and tours, field trips throughout Maryland, and online activities.

Your approval will provide a collections facility for the state's irreplaceable natural history collections, create a central location for natural science education and research, expand science literacy in Maryland, and offer an economic engine for the community. A central location will foster collaboration between individuals and organizations that don't usually have the opportunity to connect with one another.

Thank you for your time and the opportunity to share my support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Gina Foringer".

Gina Foringer
President/CEO
Environmental Research Group, LLC

Bill Numbers and dates must be at top of Page

SB 0035 (Senate Bill) Support
HB 0173 (House Bill) Support

March 12, 2026
March 17, 2026

Phyllis Kepner
6220 Burgess Avenue
Baltimore MD 21214

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 write in support of SB0035 (sponsored by Senator Jackson) and its companion bill HB 0173 (sponsored by Delegate Allen). These bills would designate the Natural History Society of Maryland as the State's official natural science museum.

Please vote in favor of the bill REHB169SP0064. The Natural History Society of Maryland has made a difference in my life and my husband's. Everytime we go there we see something or learn something new. I am part of the Lep Club. I now share my knowledge of moths and butterflies with preschoolers to adults. I volunteer at schools, churches, community events and more. I enjoy watching the excitement and wonder of children and adults teaching them how to raise moths and butterflies. I encourage people to give it a try to raise and save these special moths and butterflies. I also encourage people to visit the NHSM by giving them a card. I tell them that there is so much to learn there.

This organization is the future of natural sciences. We need to protect it. So please vote in favor of this bill, so we can continue to provide the wonderful services that the NHSM has to offer.

A NHSM Member and Volunteer,

Phyllis Kepner

SB 0035 – SUPPORT

HB 0173 – SUPPORT

March 12 & 17, 2026

Gregory S. Pokrywka, MD, FACP, FNLA, FASPC

Director, Baltimore Lipid Center

Director, WatersEdge Kayak Club

Founder & Vice President, Mid-Atlantic Turtle & Tortoise Society (MATTS)

7801 York Road, Suite 300

Towson, Maryland 21204

Senator Brian J. Feldman, Chair

Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

2 West Miller Senate Office Building

Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Delegate Melissa Wells, Chair

House Government, Labor, and Elections Committee

145 Lowe House Office Building

Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Chair Feldman and Chair Wells:

I write in strong support of Senate Bill 0035 and House Bill 0173, which would designate the Natural History Society of Maryland (NHSM) as Maryland's official natural science museum.

This designation is long overdue.

The Natural History Society of Maryland has served, in practice, as our state's natural history museum for nearly a century. It safeguards irreplaceable scientific collections, advances research, and provides extensive public education programming. Yet Maryland remains one of the few states without an officially designated natural history museum.

As a biochemist, zoologist, and physician specializing in preventive cardiology, my scientific career has been deeply shaped by an early passion for natural history. I vividly recall visiting NHSM in its former downtown location and being captivated by its collections of Maryland's native flora and fauna. That formative exposure to scientific inquiry and biodiversity influenced my professional path and lifelong commitment to science.

I am a lifetime member of NHSM and have collaborated with the Society through the Mid-Atlantic Turtle & Tortoise Society (MATTS). My kayak club, consisting of ~ 2000 members, most of whom live in the greater Baltimore area, also has collaborated with NHSM on

several projects. I myself have led a NHSM trip to explore the natural history of our unique Smith Island. I have witnessed firsthand the remarkable transformation of the museum and the extraordinary dedication of its volunteers and professional staff. Their expertise, integrity, and passion for Maryland's natural heritage are exceptional.

NHSM offers more than 300 programs annually, including lectures, field excursions across Maryland, educational workshops, youth programming, and online learning initiatives. In an era of increasing scientific misinformation and skepticism, institutions grounded in rigorous scientific standards are not optional — they are essential.

Designating NHSM as the official state natural science museum will:

- Secure a permanent collections facility for Maryland's irreplaceable natural history specimens
- Establish a centralized hub for research, collaboration, and scientific education
- Strengthen science literacy statewide
- Support community revitalization in Overlea, Parkville, and Hillendale
- Provide meaningful economic and cultural impact

Maryland's biodiversity, geological history, and ecological legacy deserve formal recognition and stewardship. NHSM has demonstrated the capacity, stability, and leadership to fulfill that role.

This legislation affirms Maryland's commitment to science, education, and preservation. I respectfully urge your favorable report on SB 0035 and HB 0173.

Thank you for your leadership and consideration.

Sincerely,

Gregory S. Pokrywka, MD

Gina Foringer
President/CEO Environmental Research Group, LLC
5700 Ridgedale Road
Baltimore, MD 21209

Senator Brian J Feldman, Chair
Senate Education, Energy and Environment Committee
2 West Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

To the Honorable Chair Senator Feldman,

I write in support of SB0035 (sponsored by Senator Jackson) and its companion bill HB 0173 (sponsored by Delegate Allen). These bills would designate the Natural History Society of Maryland as the State's official natural science museum.

NHSM is critical to the revitalization of the Overlea, Parkville and Hillendale communities and the care and protection of Maryland's natural history collections.

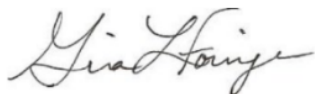
As the owner of an environmental consulting firm, I love the Natural History Society of Maryland and have worked with the staff on public engagement activities outside of the museum. They have hundreds of thousands of fascinating specimens highlighting Maryland's diverse and fascinating natural history, with more added all the time.

Their staff and volunteers are experts in their fields and passionate about our state, and they are involved in a wide variety of research and educational activities. They offer so many programs every year including in-person lectures and tours, field trips throughout Maryland, and online activities.

Your approval will provide a collections facility for the state's irreplaceable natural history collections, create a central location for natural science education and research, expand science literacy in Maryland, and offer an economic engine for the community. A central location will foster collaboration between individuals and organizations that don't usually have the opportunity to connect with one another.

Thank you for your time and the opportunity to share my support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Gina Foringer".

Gina Foringer

President/CEO

Environmental Research Group, LLC

March 12, 2026

Nikki Lawson
Project Specialist, Environmental Research Group, LLC
4540 Chews Vineyard
Ellicott City, MD 21043

Senator Brian J Feldman, Chair
Senate Education, Energy and Environment Committee
2 West Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

To the Honorable Chair Senator Feldman,

I write in support of SB0035 (sponsored by Senator Jackson) and its companion bill HB 0173 (sponsored by Delegate Allen). These bills would designate the Natural History Society of Maryland as the State's official natural science museum.

I strongly support this action because the collections held in the Natural History Society of Maryland museum have been painstakingly accumulated and cared for and deserve protection in the future.

In addition, the location in Overlea is beneficial because it provides museum options outside of the city and will draw visitors to the area.

This topic and the area are near and dear to my heart. I am employed at ERG which supports natural resources management and protection. It is so important to protect our resources going forward, as well as to document the history of what came before. I believe this museum will spark interest in others and encourage them to do both. I grew up in the area and was married very close to this location. Friends and family still live in the area which is worthy of revitalization.

The staff and volunteers are so dedicated to this mission. They are experts in their fields and work tirelessly to keep this museum alive. It is obvious when speaking with them that they are passionate about their community.

Designating this organization as a state museum would allow them to continue to care for valuable collections, provide education on Maryland's history, and spark interest in potential scientists.

Thank you for reading my letter and considering this important bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Nikki Lawson', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Nikki Lawson
Project Specialist
Environmental Research Group, LLC

SB 0035 (Senate Bill) Support
HB 0173 (House Bill) Support

March 12, 2026
March 17, 2026

March 6, 2026

Valerie Brennan
1520 Charmuth Road
Lutherville, MD 21093
443-435-3173 jvdhbrennan@gmail.com

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 am writing to express my strong support for SB 0035 (hearing March 12), and HB 0173 (hearing March 17) which would designate the Natural History Society of Maryland as Maryland's official Natural Science Museum.

I am a recently retired teacher from Baltimore County Public Schools (BCPS) and have resided in your district for close to 20 years. Having dedicated my career to public education, I deeply value initiatives that enhance learning opportunities for students across Maryland. I also recognize that you share a strong commitment to supporting education.

In my retirement, I have become actively involved as a volunteer with the Natural History Society of Maryland, where I have seen firsthand the powerful impact the organization has in engaging people of all ages through hands-on activities, access to scientific collections, and meaningful educational programming.

I was inspired to learn that volunteers assembled 400 science kits for Baltimore County Public Schools to support the teaching of evolution and other core scientific concepts. I was proud to contribute fossils from my own fieldwork with the Society to this effort. This initiative is a clear example of how the Society directly supports classroom learning and enriches science education in our schools.

SB 0035, sponsored by Senator Jackson, and its companion bill HB 0173, sponsored by Delegate Allen, represent an important opportunity to formally recognize the Society's longstanding contributions to science education, community engagement, and stewardship of Maryland's natural heritage.

I respectfully urge you to approve these bills to demonstrate your commitment to advancing science education and public learning opportunities throughout our state by designating the Natural History Society of Maryland as the State Natural Science Museum.

Thank you for your consideration and support.

Sincerely,
Valerie Brennan