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Lt. Governor  
**Timothy D. Baker**  
State Archivist and  
Commissioner of Land Patents  
**Matthew P. Lalumia**  
Chairman, Maryland Commission  
on Artistic Property



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Maryland State Archives  
Testimony in Support of  
SB0341 - General Provisions - State Song - Repeal

Before the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee  
March 11, 2021

Thank you Chair and members of the committee for scheduling this hearing and allowing me the opportunity to testify in favor of Senate Bill 341 - a bill to repeal "Maryland, My Maryland" as the State Song. My name is Timothy D. Baker, and I am the State Archivist for Maryland. Section 9-1007 of the State Government Article establishes that in my role as the State Archivist I am to review, evaluate, and make recommendations to the Maryland General Assembly regarding certain State designations. Symbols and designations are profoundly meaningful. Not only do they help define who we are, they signal to the world what matters to us - what is most important to us.

It is my recommendation that the State Song, "Maryland, My Maryland" be repealed.

You should have access to the *Report of the Advisory Group on the Maryland State Song* which the Legislature asked the Archives to develop in 2015. I included it with our justification for the Bill. In that report we argue that the current song simply does not possess the qualities and characteristics that we would want in an official song. In retrospect, I feel we were too subtle in our approach and in our actions. And it should not just be recent events that compel us to look with an even more critical eye at those things that divide us. We have known for a long time the origins of the song. The lyrics are racist. They are offensive. They are a call to arms against our own country. The lyrics do not reflect who we are or what we aspire to be. The State Song must go.

Let me say in closing that I have no proprietary interest in which repeal Bill gets passed. Among your colleagues there are some who have labored for repeal for some time and they should be recognized and given credit for their work. I merely want to add my voice to theirs. Let's just get it done. I urge favorable consideration of legislation to repeal "Maryland, My Maryland" as the official State Song.

Thank you for your consideration. If you have further questions please contact me at [tim.baker@maryland.gov](mailto:tim.baker@maryland.gov).