

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2012 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

Senate Bill 73 (Senator Kelley, *et al.*)
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

State Government - Commemorative Days - Maryland Centenarians Day

This bill requires the Governor to annually proclaim the second Thursday in May as Maryland Centenarians Day.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Commemorating Maryland Centenarians Day does not affect State finances.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: Eight official commemorative days and three months are recognized in State law as shown in **Exhibit 1**. The Governor also must issue a proclamation each year encouraging citizens and other individuals to observe a moment of silence at 3 p.m. on Memorial Day to unite in remembrance and commemorate the heroic acts and efforts of Marylanders who have served and died in the U.S. armed forces.

Background: A centenarian is someone who has reached the landmark age of 100 years. Because current average life expectancies around the world are less than 100 years, the term is invariably associated with longevity. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, in 2010, there were approximately 53,400 centenarians living in the United States and 900 living in Maryland.

Exhibit 1
Official Commemorative Days and Months in Maryland

| | |
|---|-------------------|
| Asian Lunar New Year Day ¹ | January/February |
| Black History Month | February |
| Women's History Month | March |
| John Hanson's Birthday ² | April 13 |
| Negro Baseball League Day ³ | May |
| Law Day | May 1 |
| Fire, Rescue, and Emergency Services Workers Day ⁴ | June |
| Maryland Charter Day | June 20 |
| Hispanic Heritage Month ⁵ | September/October |
| Poetry Day | October 15 |
| Annapolis Charter Day | December 17 |

¹Day designated as new year on the Asian lunar calendar.

²John Hanson served as the first president of the Continental Congress under the Articles of Confederation from 1781 to 1782.

³Commemorated on the second Saturday in May.

⁴Commemorated on the first Sunday in June.

⁵Commemorated from September 15 to October 15.

In 1963 President John F. Kennedy designated May as Senior Citizens Month; in 1980 President Jimmy Carter changed the designation to Older Americans Month. Every president since Kennedy has issued a formal proclamation asking the national to pay tribute to older people in their communities during the month of May.

The Maryland Centenarian Committee, Inc. has held a recognition luncheon on the second Thursday in May for Maryland citizens who have reached or surpassed the landmark age of 100 for the past 19 years.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Maryland Department of Planning, U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Administration on Aging, *The Baltimore Sun*, Department of Legislative Services

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mc/hlb

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