

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2014 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Revised

House Bill 40 (Delegate Murphy)

Health and Government Operations Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

State Government - Commemorative Months - American Indian Heritage Month

This bill requires the Governor to annually proclaim November as American Indian Heritage Month in recognition of the contributions that American Indians have made to the State. The proclamation must urge educational and cultural organizations to observe American Indian Heritage Month properly with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Commemorating American Indian Heritage Month does not affect State finances.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: Eleven official commemorative days and five 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.

Chapter 486 of 2008 designated the Friday after Thanksgiving Day as American Indian Heritage Day, and added it to the list of State legal and employee holidays.

Background: In 1990, former President George H.W. Bush approved a Joint Resolution of Congress designating November as National American Indian Heritage Month, a designation that has since been made each year since 1994.

In 2009, the President signed a joint resolution enacting the Native American Heritage Day Act of 2009. It declared that the Friday immediately succeeding Thanksgiving Day would be an appropriate day to designate as Native American Heritage Day. Among other findings, the resolution stated that many of the nation’s principles of free speech and separation of government reflected the long-standing practices of tribal governments. The resolution recognized the contributions Native Americans have made as artists, athletes, and scholars and emphasized the importance of the relationship between the United States and Native American governments.

Exhibit 1
Official Commemorative Days and Months in Maryland

Asian Lunar New Year Day ¹	January/February
Black History Month	February
Irish American Heritage Month	March
Women’s History Month	March
Crime Victim and Advocate Day	April 3
John Hanson’s Birthday ²	April 13
Maryland Centenarians Day ³	May
Negro Baseball League Day ⁴	May
Law Day	May 1
Fire, Rescue, and Emergency Services Workers Day ⁵	June
Maryland Charter Day	June 20
Hispanic Heritage Month ⁶	September/October
German-American Heritage Month	October
Poetry Day	October 15
Maryland Emancipation Day	November 1
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 Thursday in May.

⁴Commemorated on the second Saturday in May.

⁵Commemorated on the first Sunday in June.

⁶Commemorated from September 15 to October 15.

Source: Department of Legislative Services

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: SB 593 (Senator Rosapepe) – Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs.

Information Source(s): U.S. Library of Congress; Department of Legislative Services

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