

Department of Legislative Services  
Maryland General Assembly  
2017 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE  
Third Reader

Senate Bill 88

(Senator Simonaire)

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Health and Government Operations

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General Provisions - State Designations - Great Seal

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This bill changes the statutory translation of the Calvert family motto depicted on the Great Seal of Maryland from “Manly deeds, womanly words” to “Strong deeds, gentle words.”

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Fiscal Summary

**State Effect:** Changing the statutory translation of the Calvert family motto does not materially affect State operations or finances.

**Local Effect:** None.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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Analysis

**Current Law/Background:** The Maryland State Flag was adopted in 1904 followed by the adoption of the Black-eyed Susan as the State flower in 1918. Since then, the State has adopted many additional official symbols, as shown in **Exhibit 1**. The Governor is also authorized to designate a citizen as the State’s Poet Laureate.

As the historical agency for Maryland, the State Archives is the central depository for government records of permanent value, as well as certain designated private records. These records are available to the public for research about topics, including State symbols, on an ongoing basis. The State Archivist may, on request or at the State Archivist’s discretion, review, evaluate, and make recommendations to the General Assembly regarding State designations under Title 7 of the General Provisions Article.

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**Exhibit 1**  
**State Symbols of Maryland**

<u>Type</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Statutory Authority</u>
Bird	Baltimore Oriole	Ch. 54 of 1947
Boat	Skipjack	Ch. 788 of 1985
Cat	Calico Cat	Ch. 194 of 2001
Crustacean	Blue Crab	Ch. 724 of 1989
Dessert	Smith Island Cake	Chs. 164/165 of 2008
Dinosaur	<i>Astrodon johnstoni</i>	Chs. 403/404 of 1998
Dog	Chesapeake Bay Retriever	Ch. 156 of 1964
Drink	Milk	Ch. 220 of 1998
Exercise	Walking	Chs. 400/401 of 2008
Fish	Rockfish (Striped Bass)	Ch. 513 of 1965
Flower	Black-eyed Susan	Ch. 458 of 1918
Folk Dance	Square Dance	Ch. 707 of 1994
Fossil Shell	<i>Ecphora gardnerae gardnerae</i>	Ch. 688 of 1994
Gem	Patuxent River Stone	Ch. 272 of 2004
Horse	Thoroughbred Horse	Ch. 359 of 2003
Insect	Baltimore Checkerspot Butterfly	Ch. 253 of 1973
Reptile	Diamondback Terrapin	Ch. 476 of 1994
Song	“Maryland, My Maryland”	Ch. 451 of 1939
Sport	Jousting	Ch. 134 of 1962
Team Sport	Lacrosse	Ch. 272 of 2004
Theater	Center Stage	Ch. 1003 of 1978
Theater – Summer	Olney Theatre	Ch. 1003 of 1978
Tree	White Oak	Ch. 731 of 1941

Source: Maryland State Archives

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On June 20, 1632, Charles I of England granted the original charter for Maryland, a proprietary colony of about 12 million acres, to Cecil Calvert, 2nd Baron Baltimore, who served as the first Proprietor and Proprietary Governor of the Province of Maryland. Over the years, the State has adopted many Calvert family symbols to represent the State. For example, the State flag is based on the Calvert family heraldic banner.

The Calvert family motto, “*Fatti maschii parole femine*,” is in Italian. *The Washington Post* reports that, according to a spokesman at the Italian Embassy in Washington, the phrase is derived from a comment made by Pope Clement VII in the sixteenth century when he was returning to Italy after a trip to France. According to the spokesman, the

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phrase is generally understood to mean “men do things, and women talk about things.” Another wordier translation is “When you need things done, ask a man, because women only talk and don’t arrive to a conclusion.” It is unclear why the phrase became the Calvert family motto.

Chapter 396 of 1959 codified the Great Seal of Maryland, which includes the Calvert family motto of “*Fatti maschii, parole femine.*” At this time, statute stated that the phrase “*Fatti maschii, parole femine,*” was “translated usually as ‘Manly deeds, womanly words.’” In 1969, this language was amended to read “*Fatti Maschi Parole Femine*” (one less ‘i’ in the word *maschii*) and stated that the phrase was “loosely translated as ‘Deeds are manly, words are womanly’” (Chapter 79). In 1975, this language was once again amended to revert back to “*Fatti maschii parole femine*” (with two ‘i’s’) and to be “loosely translated as ‘manly deeds, womanly words’” (Chapter 370).

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** SB 39 of 2016, as amended by the Senate, was referred to the House Rules and Executive Nominations Committee, but no further action was taken.

**Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Maryland State Archives; *The Washington Post*; Historic St. Mary’s City; Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - January 17, 2017  
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