

**Department of Legislative Services**  
2018 Session

**FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE**  
**First Reader**

House Bill 608 (Delegate Hayes)  
Health and Government Operations

---

**State Government - State Song - Revision**

---

This bill changes the State song lyrics to be the poem “Maryland, My Maryland!” as written by Sean Tully in 2017 and derived from the poem “Maryland! My Maryland!” as originally written by James Ryder Randall in 1861.

---

**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** Replacing the State song lyrics does not materially affect State operations or finances.

**Local Effect:** None.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

---

**Analysis**

**Current Law:** The Maryland State Flag was adopted as the State flag 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.

The official State song consists of the lyrics from “Maryland! My Maryland!” written by James Ryder Randall in 1861 and set to the tune of “Lauriger Horatius.”

---

**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

---

**Background:** As noted in the preamble, “Maryland! My Maryland!” was composed by James Ryder Randall in 1861 at a time when he was despondent over the death of a friend who was shot while protesting Union troops as they marched through Baltimore. Randall, who was born in Baltimore, wrote the poem while working as an English and Classics professor at Poydras College in Louisiana, according to the Baltimore Literary Heritage Project. The poem, which calls for Maryland to “spurn the Northern Scum” was adopted by Southern troops as a battle hymn during the civil war. It was adopted as the State song in 1939.

The State Song Advisory Group convened in October 2015 and recommended alternatives to the current State song, including a recommendation that the third verse of the State song could be retained in combination with new lyrics. The third verse references Charles Carroll, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, and John Eager Howard, an American Revolutionary War hero. According to the bill's preamble, Sean Tully, a resident of Baltimore City, noted that while the third verse highlighted two great Marylanders, the verse is not inclusive as both individuals highlighted were male slaveholders. In an effort to retain the third verse while making the song inclusive, Mr. Tully wrote a poem derived from Mr. Randall's poem and included a reference to Harriet Tubman. Harriet Tubman, born a slave in Dorchester County, helped free more than 300 slaves over a decade by making 19 trips through the Underground Railroad.

The [final report](#) of the advisory group can be found on the Maryland State Archives website.

---

### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** None. However, several bills were introduced in the 2016, 2009, 2002, and 2001 sessions to replace the State song.

**Cross File:** SB 1018 (Senator Robinson) - Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs.

**Information Source(s):** Maryland State Archives; Baltimore Literacy Heritage Project; Harriet Tubman Historical Society; Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - February 20, 2018  
md/mcr

---

Analysis by: Jennifer K. Botts

Direct Inquiries to:  
(410) 946-5510  
(301) 970-5510