

Department of Legislative Services
2018 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

Senate Bill 1018 (Senator Robinson)
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

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: HB 608 (Delegate Hayes) - Health and Government Operations.

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

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