

SENATE BILL 879

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By: Senators Griffith, Miller, Augustine, Bailey, Beidle, Benson, Carozza, Carter, Cassilly, Eckardt, Edwards, Elfreth, Ellis, Feldman, Ferguson, Gallion, Guzzone, Hayes, Hershey, Hester, Hough, Jennings, Kagan, Kelley, King, Klausmeier, Kramer, Lam, Lee, McCray, Nathan-Pulliam, Patterson, Peters, Pinsky, Ready, Reilly, Rosapepe, Salling, Serafini, Simonaire, Smith, Waldstreicher, Washington, West, Young, Zirkin, and Zucker

Introduced and read first time: February 8, 2019

Assigned to: Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Primary and Secondary Education – Black History Month – Harriet Tubman**
3 **and Frederick Douglass**

4 FOR the purpose of requiring certain public schools to devote a certain part of the day to
5 exercises that relate to Black History Month with an emphasis on certain individuals
6 and the contributions they made in the fight against slavery; and generally relating
7 to Black History Month and Harriet Tubman and Frederick Douglass.

8 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
9 Article – Education
10 Section 7–103(c)(3)
11 Annotated Code of Maryland
12 (2018 Replacement Volume and 2018 Supplement)

13 Preamble

14 WHEREAS, Both Harriet Tubman and Frederick Douglass were abolitionists and
15 political activists in the late 1800's whose contributions were instrumental in the fight
16 against slavery; and

17 WHEREAS, Both Tubman and Douglass have roots in Maryland, Tubman having
18 been born a slave in Dorchester County, Maryland and Douglass having escaped from
19 slavery in Talbot County, Maryland; and

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 WHEREAS, Tubman's efforts in the operation of the Underground Railroad resulted
2 in 13 missions that rescued and freed approximately 70 enslaved individuals including
3 family, friends, and others; and

4 WHEREAS, Douglass was a well-known orator, writer, and statesman who
5 published multiple autobiographies that were influential in promoting the cause of
6 abolition; and

7 WHEREAS, The State of Maryland celebrates Black History Month in the month of
8 February every year; now, therefore,

9 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
10 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

11 **Article – Education**

12 7–103.

13 (c) (3) The public schools shall devote a part of the day to appropriate exercises
14 for the following [days]:

15 (i) Washington's Birthday;

16 (ii) Lincoln's Birthday;

17 (iii) Veterans' Day;

18 (iv) Columbus Day;

19 (v) Arbor Day; [and]

20 (VI) **BLACK HISTORY MONTH, WITH AN EMPHASIS ON HARRIET**
21 **TUBMAN AND FREDERICK DOUGLASS AND THE CONTRIBUTIONS THEY MADE IN THE**
22 **FIGHT AGAINST SLAVERY; AND**

23 [(vi)] (VII) Any other day of national significance.

24 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
25 October 1, 2019.