

Department of Legislative Services  
Maryland General Assembly  
2020 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE  
First Reader

House Bill 181 (Delegate Reznik, *et al.*)  
Health and Government Operations

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General Provisions - State Song - Advisory Panel

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This bill repeals the State Song, “Maryland! My Maryland!” and establishes a State Song Advisory Panel, staffed by the Maryland State Archives (MSA), to review public submissions for a new State song. By December 1, 2020, the panel must report its recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly. **The advisory panel takes effect June 1, 2020, and terminates June 30, 2021. The repeal of the State song takes effect June 1, 2021.**

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Fiscal Summary

**State Effect:** MSA can staff the advisory panel with existing resources. Any expense reimbursements are assumed to be minimal and absorbable within existing budgeted resources. Revenues are not affected.

**Local Effect:** None.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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Analysis

**Bill Summary:** The panel must (1) review public submissions and suggestions for a new State song; (2) hold at least three public hearings to receive public input regarding an appropriate State song; and (3) recommend, based on public input, lyrics and a melody for the General Assembly to consider adopting as the State song.

A member of the panel may not receive compensation but is entitled to reimbursement for expenses under the standard State travel regulations, as provided in the State budget.

**Current Law:** Since the adoption of the Maryland State Flag in 1904 and the adoption of the Black-eyed Susan as the State flower in 1918, the State has adopted many official

symbols, as shown in **Exhibit 1**. The official State song is James Ryder Randall’s “Maryland! My Maryland!” set to the tune of “Lauriger Horatius.”

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

<b><u>Type</u></b>	<b><u>Name</u></b>	<b><u>Statutory Authority</u></b>
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
Paleontology Collection and Research Center	Calvert Marine Museum	Chs. 742/743 of 2018
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; Department of Legislative Services

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**Background:** James Ryder Randall composed “Maryland! My Maryland!” in 1861 to protest the marching of Union troops through Baltimore. According to the Baltimore Literary Heritage Project, Randall, a Baltimore native, wrote the poem during his tenure as an English and Classics professor at Poydras College in Louisiana. Southern troops adopted the poem, which calls for Maryland to “spurn the Northern Scum,” as a battle hymn during the Civil War. Maryland adopted the poem as the State song in 1939.

In October 2015, the State Archivist convened the State Song Advisory Group to study and recommend alternatives to the current State song. The group recommended six alternatives in its final [report](#), which is available on MSA’s website.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** HB 128 of 2019 received a hearing in the House Health and Government Operations Committee, but no further action was taken. HB 508 of 2018 received an unfavorable report from the House Health and Government Operations Committee. SB 222 of 2016, a similar bill, received an unfavorable report from the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee. HB 417 of 2016, a similar bill, received a hearing in the House Health and Government Operations Committee but was withdrawn.

**Designated Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Maryland State Archives; Department of Legislative Services

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