

Department of Legislative Services  
Maryland General Assembly  
2024 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE  
First Reader

House Bill 1286 (Delegate McComas)  
Health and Government Operations

---

Task Force to Propose the Maryland State Song

---

This bill establishes the Task Force to Propose the Maryland State Song. The task force must study history and culture in the State to recommend the adoption of a State song. The Maryland State Archives (MSA) must staff the task force. A member of the task force may not receive compensation but is entitled to reimbursement for expenses under standard State travel regulations. By December 1, 2024, the task force must report its findings and recommendations to the General Assembly. **The bill takes effect October 1, 2024, and terminates September 30, 2025.**

---

Fiscal Summary

**State Effect:** MSA can likely staff the task force 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.

---

Analysis

**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 Governor is also authorized to designate a citizen as the State's Poet Laureate.

---

**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</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
Spirit	Maryland Rye or Maryland Rye Whiskey	Chs. 308/309 of 2023
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

---

Chapters 148 and 149 of 2021 repealed the official State song, James Ryder Randall's "Maryland! My Maryland!" set to the tune of "Lauriger Horatius" effective July 1, 2021.

**Additional Comments:** A State Song Advisory Group, headed by the State Archivist, convened in October 2015 and recommended six alternatives to the State song. The final [report](#) of the advisory group can be found on the MSA website.

---

### **Additional Information**

**Recent Prior Introductions:** Similar legislation has not been introduced within the last three years.

**Designated Cross File:** None.

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

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - March 11, 2024  
rh/jc

---

Analysis by: Arnold H. Adja

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