

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2006 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 614 (Delegate V. Clagett, *et al.*)
Health and Government Operations

State Government - Maryland Children's Day

This bill requires the Governor to proclaim June 1 as Maryland Children's Day. All citizens of Maryland are encouraged to express their love and appreciation for children throughout the year and work within their communities to nurture, love, and teach the children of Maryland.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Commemorating Maryland Children's Day would not affect State finances.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: Three official commemorative days and one month are recognized in State law as shown in **Exhibit 1**. In addition, the Governor must issue a proclamation each year encouraging citizens and other individuals to observe a moment of silence at 3 p.m. on Memorial Day to unite in remembrance and commemorate the heroic acts and efforts of Marylanders who have served and died in the United States armed forces.

Background: The United Nations recommended in 1954 that all countries institute a Universal Children's Day to be observed as a day of worldwide fraternity and understanding among children. Many nations have designated November 20 as their official Children's Day, which corresponds with the day on which the United Nations

adopted the Declaration of the Rights of the Child, in 1959, and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, in 1989. For example, the Canadian government has designated November 20 as National Child Day.

The United States has designated various months for commemorating children. During the Clinton Presidency, a date in October was proclaimed National Children's Day. President Bush has commemorated National Child's Day in either late May or early June. In 2005, National Child's Day was commemorated on June 3. In Maryland, the Governor declared June 1, 2005 as Maryland Children's Day.

The Annie E. Casey Foundation updates a report each year entitled *KIDS COUNT* that measures the well-being of children across the country by using 10 key health and social indicators (*i.e.*, child poverty, infant mortality, teen births, high school dropout rates, and children in single-parent households.) Based on these indicators, Maryland ranked nineteenth in the nation in 2005, higher than each surrounding state except for Virginia which ranked thirteenth. New Hampshire and Vermont had the best rankings for child well-being; whereas, Louisiana and Mississippi had the worst rankings. **Exhibit 2** provides information on selected social indicators for Maryland counties.

Exhibit 1
Official Commemorative Days and Months in Maryland

John Hanson's Birthday ¹	April 13
Law Day	May 1
Poetry Day	October 15
Women's History Month	March

¹John Hanson served as the first president of the Continental Congress under the Articles of Confederation from 1781 to 1782.

Exhibit 2
Measures of Child Well-being in Maryland

County	Child Poverty 2003 Rate	Infant Mortality 2003 Rate	Single-parent Households 2000 Census	High School Dropout Rate 2005 Report
Allegany	19.3%	8.3	28.6%	2.7%
Anne Arundel	7.4%	6.8	24.2%	2.3%
Baltimore City	26.6%	12.1	60.9%	11.7%
Baltimore	9.8%	7.6	30.4%	4.5%
Calvert	7.0%	5.2	20.0%	2.1%
Caroline	15.4%	11.7	32.6%	2.4%
Carroll	5.6%	4.2	17.1%	1.2%
Cecil	11.5%	8.4	26.6%	4.2%
Charles	9.7%	7.2	29.0%	3.5%
Dorchester	20.6%	8.6	39.7%	6.0%
Frederick	6.6%	4.7	20.0%	0.7%
Garrett	18.7%	10.9	21.2%	2.5%
Harford	8.1%	5.1	21.5%	3.1%
Howard	5.3%	6.0	18.9%	1.4%
Kent	15.5%	11.2	34.2%	4.8%
Montgomery	8.4%	5.6	20.9%	1.8%
Prince George's	11.5%	10.9	39.4%	3.6%
Queen Anne's	8.3%	4.0	22.4%	3.2%
St. Mary's	10.7%	7.4	24.4%	2.9%
Somerset	25.1%	9.3	37.2%	5.4%
Talbot	11.9%	5.2	27.5%	1.2%
Washington	13.9%	5.5	29.2%	1.9%
Wicomico	16.8%	9.4	34.7%	4.0%
Worcester	15.8%	6.5	32.1%	2.1%
Total	11.5%	7.9	30.3%	3.7%

Note: Infant mortality rate is the number of infants who die before their first birthday per 1,000 live births.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Advocates for Children and Youth, Maryland State Department of Education

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): United Nations, Annie E. Casey Foundation, Advocates for Children and Youth, Department of Legislative Services

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Analysis by: Hiram L. Burch Jr.

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