

Department of Legislative Services  
Maryland General Assembly  
2007 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 471 (Delegate Healey, *et al.*)  
Health and Government Operations

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State Government - State Soil - Sassafras Soil

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This bill designates Sassafras sandy loam as the State soil.

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Fiscal Summary

**State Effect:** Designating a State soil would not affect State finances.

**Local Effect:** None

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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Analysis

**Current Law:** An official State soil has not been adopted by the Maryland General Assembly; however, the U.S. Department of Agriculture has categorized the Sassafras soil series as the official state soil of Maryland.

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 20 additional official symbols as shown in **Exhibit 1**. The Governor is also authorized to designate a citizen as the State's Poet Laureate.

**Background:** According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, a state soil is a soil that has special significance to a particular state. Every state has a designated state soil, 19 of which have been legislatively established. **Exhibit 2** lists the states that have legislatively enacted a state soil.

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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
Dinosaur	Astrodon johnstoni	Ch. 404 of 1998
Dog	Chesapeake Bay Retriever	Ch. 156 of 1964
Drink	Milk	Ch. 220 of 1998
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

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Source: Maryland State Archives

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**Exhibit 2**  
**States with Official State Soils – Legislatively Established**

Alabama	1997	Michigan	1990
Arkansas	1997	Mississippi	2003
California	1997	Nebraska	1979
Delaware	2000	Nevada	2001
Florida	1989	Oklahoma	1987
Illinois	2001	South Dakota	1990
Kansas	1990	Vermont	1985
Kentucky	1990	West Virginia	1997
Maine	1999	Wisconsin	1983
Massachusetts	1991		

Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture

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**Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Maryland State Archives, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - March 1, 2007  
ncs/jr

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