

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2007 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

Senate Bill 331 (Senator Frosh)
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Health and Government Operations

State Government - Commemorative Days - Rachel Carson Day

This bill requires the Governor to proclaim May 27 as Rachel Carson Day.

The bill takes effect June 1, 2007.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Commemorating Rachel Carson Day would not affect State finances.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: Four official commemorative days and one month are recognized in State law as shown in **Exhibit 1**. The Governor also 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 U.S. armed forces.

Background: Rachel Louise Carson was a renowned writer, scientist, and ecologist who served as an aquatic biologist and editor-in-chief for the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. Carson is credited with launching the contemporary environmental movement. Carson resided in Maryland when she produced her most important writings, including the *Silent Spring*.

Carson was born in 1907 in a small rural Pennsylvania community near the Allegany River. She graduated from Pennsylvania College for Women (now Chatham College) in 1929, studied at the U.S. Marine Laboratory in Woods Hole, Massachusetts, and received her M.A. in zoology from Johns Hopkins University in 1932. In 1936, Carson was appointed a junior aquatic biologist with the U.S. Bureau of Fisheries and became one of only two women then employed with the bureau at a professional level. Through her work, Carson often visited the Chesapeake Bay region, meeting with watermen and touring commercial plants and conservation facilities. In 1943, Carson was promoted to the position of aquatic biologist in the newly created U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. She later became editor-in-chief of all Fish & Wildlife Service publications.

In 1952, due to the success of several scientific books, Carson resigned her position with the federal government and devoted her time to writing. In 1962, she published her last book, *Silent Spring*, which created a new awareness in the general public and the government of the risks of certain pesticides. Her work led to a ban on DDT and a subsequent resurgence of many wildlife species in the United States, including the bald eagle.

In honor of her contributions, Carson received the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the nation's highest civilian award. In addition, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service has named one of its refuges near Carson's summer home on the coast of Maine as the Rachel Carson National Wildlife Refuge.

Rachel Carson died from breast cancer in 1964 at the age of 56.

Exhibit 1
Official Commemorative Days and Months in Maryland

Asian Lunar New Year Day ¹	January
John Hanson's Birthday ²	April 13
Law Day	May 1
Poetry Day	October 15
Women's History Month	March

¹Day designated as new year on the Asian lunar calendar.

²John Hanson served as the first president of the Continental Congress under the Articles of Confederation from 1781 to 1782.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Department of Legislative Services

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