

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2008 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 209 (Delegate Riley, *et al.*)
Health and Government Operations

State Government - Commemorative Weeks - Pollinator Week

This bill requires the Governor to proclaim the last week of June as Pollinator Week. The proclamation must urge educational, agricultural, and conservation organizations to observe Pollinator Week properly with appropriate programs and activities.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: The bill would not directly affect governmental operations or finances.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: Four official commemorative days and two months 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.

Exhibit 1
Official Commemorative Days and Months in Maryland

| | |
|---------------------------------------|------------|
| Asian Lunar New Year Day ¹ | January |
| Black History Month | February |
| Women's History Month | March |
| John Hanson's Birthday ² | April 13 |
| Law Day U.S.A. | May 1 |
| Poetry Day | October 15 |

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.

Background: The U.S. Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Senate designated the week of June 24-30, 2007 as National Pollinator Week, recognizing the importance of pollinators to ecosystem health and agriculture in the United States. Pollinator Week events were held in Maryland and across the country, and according to the Pollinator Partnership, a project of the National American Pollinator Protection Campaign (NAPPC), 19 states also officially recognized Pollinator Week in 2007. A second annual National Pollinator Week is planned for June 22-28, 2008.

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, pollinator species such as bees, birds, and insects are essential to produce much of our food supply and pollinate 75% of all crops grown in the United States. USDA also indicates that pollination plays a vital role in the health of the nation's forests and grasslands. The importance of pollinator species has received media attention recently due to the disappearance of honey bee colonies that, according to the North American Pollinator Protection Campaign, appears to be occurring across the United States. The disappearance of the honeybees is referred to as Colony Collapse Disorder, yet the cause of the problem is not fully understood.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Maryland Department of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture, North American Pollinator Protection Campaign (The Pollinator Partnership), Department of Legislative Services

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mll/hlb

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