

Department of Legislative Services  
Maryland General Assembly  
2010 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

Senate Bill 964 (Senator Muse)  
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

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State Government - Sickle Cell Anemia Awareness Month

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This bill requires the Governor to annually proclaim the month of September as Sickle Cell Anemia Awareness Month.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2010.

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Fiscal Summary

**State Effect:** Commemorating Sickle Cell Anemia Awareness Month will not affect State finances.

**Local Effect:** None.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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Analysis

**Current Law:** Seven 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.

**Background:** Sickle cell disease is a group of inherited red blood cell disorders. Healthy red blood cells are round, and they move through small blood vessels to carry oxygen to all parts of the body. In sickle cell disease, the red blood cells become hard and sticky and look like a C-shaped farm tool called a “sickle.” The sickle cells die early,

which causes a constant shortage of red blood cells. Also, when they travel through small blood vessels, they get stuck and clog the blood flow. This can cause pain and other serious problems.

Sickle cell anemia is one type of anemia, a condition in which blood has a lower than normal number of red blood cells. Sickle cell anemia is an inherited, lifelong disease. People who have the disease are born with it. Sickle cell anemia affects millions of people worldwide. The disease has no widely available cure. However, there are treatments for the symptoms and complications of the disease. Bone marrow transplants may offer a cure in a small number of cases.

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**Exhibit 1**  
**Official Commemorative Days and Months in Maryland**

Asian Lunar New Year Day <sup>1</sup>	January/February
Black History Month	February
Women's History Month	March
John Hanson's Birthday <sup>2</sup>	April 13
Law Day	May 1
Negro Baseball League Day <sup>3</sup>	May
Maryland Charter Day	June 20
Poetry Day	October 15
Annapolis Charter Day	December 17

<sup>1</sup>Day designated as new year on the Asian lunar calendar.

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

<sup>3</sup>Negro Baseball League Day is held the second Saturday of May.

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**Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** HB 1265 of 2009 received an unfavorable report from the House Health and Government Operations Committee. Its cross file, SB 1048 was withdrawn.

**Cross File:** HB 333 (Delegates Walker and Oaks) - Health and Government Operations.

**Information Source(s):** Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - March 1, 2010  
ncs/hlb

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