

Department of Legislative Services  
Maryland General Assembly  
2012 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 102 (Delegate Aumann, *et al.*)  
Health and Government Operations

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State Government - Commemorative Month - German-American Heritage Month

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This bill requires the Governor to annually proclaim the month of October as German-American Heritage Month and to urge educational and cultural organizations to observe German-American Heritage Month with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2012.

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Fiscal Summary

**State Effect:** Commemorating German-American Heritage Month does not affect State finances.

**Local Effect:** None.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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Analysis

**Current Law:** Eight official commemorative days and three 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:** German-Americans comprise the largest self-reported ancestral group in the State, as well as in the nation. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 14.1% of

Marylanders were of German-American descent. Both the western and northern parts of the State have large German-American populations. German-Americans have been highly influential in American history and society, and a number of German-American celebrations are held annually in major cities across the United States.

German-American Day, observed annually on October 6, was first celebrated in the nineteenth century. The commemoration later died out as a result of anti-German sentiment that prevailed in the first half of the twentieth century but was revived in 1983, when President Ronald Reagan proclaimed October 6 as German-American Day to celebrate three centuries of German-American immigration and culture. In 1987, President Regan signed the commemoration into law.

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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
Negro Baseball League Day <sup>3</sup>	May
Law Day	May 1
Fire, Rescue, and Emergency Services Workers Day <sup>4</sup>	June
Maryland Charter Day	June 20
Hispanic Heritage Month <sup>5</sup>	September/October
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>Commemorated on the second Saturday in May.

<sup>4</sup>Commemorated on the first Sunday in June.

<sup>5</sup>Commemorated from September 15 to October 15.

## Additional Information

**Prior Introductions:** SB 121 of 2011 received an unfavorable report from the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee. Its cross file, HB 142, received a hearing in the House Health and Government Operations Committee, but no further action was taken.

**Cross File:** SB 42 (Senator Klausmeier, *et al.*) - Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs.

**Information Source(s):** U.S. Census Bureau, Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - January 23, 2012  
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