

**Department of Legislative Services**  
Maryland General Assembly  
2012 Session

**FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE**

Senate Bill 36 (Senator Reilly)  
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

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**State Government - Commemorative Month - Irish-American Heritage Month**

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

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** Commemorating Irish-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:** Irish-Americans comprise one of the largest self-reported ancestral groups in the State, as well as in the nation. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, more than 10% of Marylanders are of Irish-American descent. Irish-Americans have been highly influential in American history and society, and a number of Irish-American parades are

held annually in major cities across the United States to celebrate St. Patrick's Day in March.

The U.S. Congress first designated March as Irish-American Heritage Month in 1991. Each year since 1991, the President of the United States has annually proclaimed March to be Irish-American Heritage Month.

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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.

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## **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** SB 815 of 2011 received an unfavorable report from the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee.

**Cross File:** None.

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

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - January 17, 2012  
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