

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2013 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

Senate Bill 7 (Senator Reilly)
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

State Government - Commemorative Month - Irish American Heritage Month

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.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Commemorating Irish American Heritage Month does not affect State finances.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: Nine 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.

Exhibit 1
Official Commemorative Days and Months in Maryland

Asian Lunar New Year Day ¹	January/February
Black History Month	February
Women's History Month	March
Crime Victim and Advocate Day	April 3
John Hanson's Birthday ²	April 13
Negro Baseball League Day ³	May
Law Day	May 1
Fire, Rescue, and Emergency Services Workers Day ⁴	June
Maryland Charter Day	June 20
Hispanic Heritage Month ⁵	September/October
Poetry Day	October 15
Annapolis Charter Day	December 17

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.

³Commemorated on the second Saturday in May.

⁴Commemorated on the first Sunday in June.

⁵Commemorated from September 15 to October 15.

Source: Department of Legislative Services

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: SB 36 of 2012 passed the Senate, but was never heard in the House. SB 815 of 2011 received an unfavorable report from the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee.

Cross File: HB 77 (Delegate McHale) – Health and Government Operations.

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

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