

Department of Legislative Services  
Maryland General Assembly  
2013 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

Senate Bill 17 (Senator Klausmeier, *et al.*)  
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

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State Government - Commemorative Day - German-American Heritage Day

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This bill requires the Governor to annually proclaim October 3 as German-American Heritage Day and to urge educational and cultural organizations to observe German-American Heritage Day with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2013.

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Fiscal Summary

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

**Local Effect:** None.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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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:** 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, 13.8% of Marylanders are 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.

October 3 is the Day of German Unity; it has been a German national holiday since the reunification of East and West Germany in 1990. It is celebrated each year with ceremonial acts and festivals in the federal capital of Berlin and in the capital of the German state presiding over the federal council, or Bundesrat.

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
Crime Victim and Advocate Day	April 3
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.

Source: Department of Legislative Services

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## **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Cross File:** HB 34 (Delegate Aumann) - Health and Government Operations.

**Information Source(s):** U.S. Census Bureau, German Missions in the United States, Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - January 17, 2013  
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