

# HOUSE BILL 549

P1  
HB 1341/13 – HGO

4lr1675

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By: **Delegates Stukes, Anderson, Arora, Clippinger, Conaway, Harper, Ivey, Mitchell, Oaks, B. Robinson, Rosenberg, Simmons, Summers, and Tarrant**

Introduced and read first time: January 29, 2014  
Assigned to: Health and Government Operations

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Committee Report: Favorable  
House action: Adopted  
Read second time: March 12, 2014

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## CHAPTER \_\_\_\_\_

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **General Provisions – Commemorative Days – Juneteenth National Freedom**  
3 **Day**

4 FOR the purpose of requiring the Governor annually to proclaim a certain day as  
5 Juneteenth National Freedom Day; providing for the effective date of certain  
6 provisions of this Act; providing for the termination of certain provisions of this  
7 Act; and generally relating to commemorative days.

8 BY adding to  
9 Article – State Government  
10 Section 13–413  
11 Annotated Code of Maryland  
12 (2009 Replacement Volume and 2013 Supplement)

13 BY renumbering  
14 Article – General Provisions  
15 Section 7–409 through 7–412  
16 to be Section 7–410 through 7–413  
17 Annotated Code of Maryland  
18 (As enacted by Chapter \_\_\_\_ (4lr1244) of the Acts of the General Assembly of  
19 2014)

20 BY adding

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### EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.

Underlining indicates amendments to bill.

~~Strike out~~ indicates matter stricken from the bill by amendment or deleted from the law by amendment.



1 Article – General Provisions  
2 Section 7–409  
3 Annotated Code of Maryland  
4 (As enacted by Chapter \_\_\_\_ (4lr1244) of the Acts of the General Assembly of  
5 2014)

6 Preamble

7 WHEREAS, More than 140 years old, Juneteenth National Freedom Day is the  
8 oldest holiday in the United States commemorating the end of slavery; and

9 WHEREAS, Also known as “Emancipation Day”, “Emancipation Celebration”,  
10 “Freedom Day”, “Jun–Jun”, and “Juneteenth”, Juneteenth National Freedom Day  
11 commemorates the strong survival instinct of African Americans who were first  
12 brought to this country crowded into the bottom of slave ships in a month–long  
13 journey across the Atlantic Ocean known as the “Middle Passage”; and

14 WHEREAS, Approximately 11,500,000 African Americans survived the voyage  
15 to the New World – and the number who died during passage is likely greater – only to  
16 be subjected to whipping, castration, branding, and rape and forced to submit to  
17 slavery for more than 200 years after their arrival in the United States; and

18 WHEREAS, Events in the history of the United States that led to the Civil War  
19 in 1861 centered around regional differences between the North and South that were  
20 based on the economic and social divergence caused by the existence of slavery; and

21 WHEREAS, Abraham Lincoln, who was inaugurated as President of the United  
22 States in 1861, believed and stated that the paramount objective of the Civil War was  
23 to save the Union, rather than to destroy slavery, but in stating his wish that “all men  
24 everywhere could be free”, Lincoln added to the growing anticipation by slaves that  
25 their ultimate liberation was at hand; and

26 WHEREAS, In 1862, the first clear signs that the end of slavery was imminent  
27 came when laws abolishing slavery in the territories of Oklahoma, Nebraska,  
28 Colorado, and New Mexico were passed; and

29 WHEREAS, By September 1862, President Lincoln had warned the 11  
30 rebellious Confederate states that if they did not return to the Union by January 1,  
31 1863, he would declare their slaves “forever free” via the celebrated Emancipation  
32 Proclamation; and

33 WHEREAS, News of this action reached the states at different times, and it was  
34 not until June 19, 1865, that the message of freedom reached the slaves in Texas,  
35 Oklahoma, Louisiana, Arkansas, and California; and

36 WHEREAS, Spontaneous celebrations erupted throughout the country when  
37 African Americans learned of their freedom; and

1 WHEREAS, Juneteenth National Freedom Day, which recalls how slaves hated  
2 slavery and celebrated its abolishment with excitement and great joy, serves as a  
3 reminder to all Americans of the status and importance of Americans of African  
4 descent; now, therefore,

5 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF  
6 MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

7 **Article – State Government**

8 **13–413.**

9 **THE GOVERNOR ANNUALLY SHALL PROCLAIM JUNE 19 AS JUNETEENTH**  
10 **NATIONAL FREEDOM DAY.**

11 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED BY THE GENERAL  
12 ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That Section(s) 7–409 through 7–412, respectively, of  
13 Article – General Provisions of the Annotated Code of Maryland be renumbered to be  
14 Section(s) 7–410 through 7–413, respectively.

15 SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That the Laws of Maryland  
16 read as follows:

17 **Article – General Provisions**

18 **7–409.**

19 **THE GOVERNOR ANNUALLY SHALL PROCLAIM JUNE 19 AS JUNETEENTH**  
20 **NATIONAL FREEDOM DAY.**

21 SECTION 4. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That Sections 2 and 3 of this  
22 Act shall take effect on the taking effect of Chapter \_\_\_\_ (4lr1244) of the Acts of the  
23 General Assembly of 2014. If Sections 2 and 3 of this Act takes effect, Section 1 of this  
24 Act shall be abrogated and of no further force and effect.

25 SECTION 5. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That, subject to the provisions  
26 of Section 4 of this Act, this Act shall take effect June 1, 2014.