

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2014 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

Senate Bill 703 (Senator Benson)
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

General Provisions - Commemorative Months - Children's Dental Health Month

This bill requires the Governor to annually proclaim February as Children's Dental Health Month.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Commemorating Children's Dental Health Month does not affect State finances.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: Eleven official commemorative days and five 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: As noted in the preamble, preventable tooth decay is the most common chronic disease in children. According to the National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research, more than 40% of children ages 2 to 11 have had a cavity in their baby teeth, and more than two-thirds of 16- to 19-year-olds have had a cavity in their permanent teeth. Dental decay can lead to lost instruction time at school for children and lost work time for adults.

Each February, the American Dental Association (ADA) sponsors National Children's Dental Health Month to raise awareness about the importance of oral health. Other groups also observe Children's Dental Health Month in February.

Exhibit 1
Official Commemorative Days and Months in Maryland

Asian Lunar New Year Day ¹	January/February
Black History Month	February
Irish American Heritage Month	March
Women's History Month	March
Crime Victim and Advocate Day	April 3
John Hanson's Birthday ²	April 13
Maryland Centenarians Day ³	May
Negro Baseball League Day ⁴	May
Law Day	May 1
Fire, Rescue, and Emergency Services Workers Day ⁵	June
Maryland Charter Day	June 20
Hispanic Heritage Month ⁶	September/October
German-American Heritage Month	October
Poetry Day	October 15
Maryland Emancipation Day	November 1
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 Thursday in May.

⁴Commemorated on the second Saturday in May.

⁵Commemorated on the first Sunday in June.

⁶Commemorated from September 15 to October 15.

Source: Department of Legislative Services

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: HB 799 (Delegate Tarrant, *et al.*) - Health and Government Operations.

Information Source(s): American Dental Association, National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research, Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 12, 2014
ncs/hlb

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