

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2015 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Revised

House Bill 354 (Calvert County Delegation)
Environment and Transportation Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Calvert County - Task Force to Study the Commemoration of Harriet Elizabeth Brown

This bill establishes the Task Force to Study the Commemoration of Harriet Elizabeth Brown. The task force must (1) study and make recommendations on the commemoration of Harriet Elizabeth Brown, such as renaming an elementary or secondary school, a building connected with an institution of higher education, a school board facility, or any other education-related center or building located in Calvert County; (2) consider in its recommendation an appropriate way to commemorate Harriet Elizabeth Brown, given her legacy as an educator and the region in which she resided from 1937 through the remainder of her life; (3) hold public hearings to gather public input and recommendations; and (4) consider the cost-effectiveness of its findings before making its recommendations. The staff of the Calvert County legislative delegation must provide staff support to the task force. By December 31, 2015, the task force must report its findings and recommendations to the Calvert County Commissioners, the Governor, and the General Assembly.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2015, and terminates June 30, 2016.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None. The staff of the Calvert County legislative delegation can staff the task force with existing resources.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Background: As noted in the preamble, Harriet Elizabeth Brown was a Calvert County school teacher from 1931 to 1973. During her employment as a teacher, she became aware that African American teachers were paid significantly less than their White counterparts with the same level of education and experience. In 1937, Ms. Brown enlisted the aid of a young attorney named Thurgood Marshall, then special counsel for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), to challenge the inequity of separate pay scales for public school teachers based on race. The landmark case was settled in Ms. Brown's favor by the Calvert County Board of Education on December 27, 1937, and was a turning point for salary equalization in the State of Maryland. Ms. Brown, a civil rights pioneer and long-time resident of the State of Maryland, died on January 1, 2009, at the age of 101.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Calvert County, Maryland State Archives, Department of Legislative Services

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