

# HOUSE BILL 215

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CF SB 49

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By: **Delegates K. Young, Reznik, Ebersole, Angel, Barve, Brooks, Carr, Clippinger, Cullison, Hayes, Hettleman, Hill, Jalisi, Kelly, Lam, Lierman, McCray, A. Miller, Moon, Morales, Oaks, Pena–Melnyk, Platt, S. Robinson, Rosenberg, Sample–Hughes, Sydnor, Tarlau, A. Washington, and M. Washington**

Introduced and read first time: January 22, 2016

Assigned to: Health and Government Operations

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## A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Maryland State Song – Revision**

3 FOR the purpose of revising the State song; and generally relating to the State song.

4 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,

5 Article – General Provisions

6 Section 7–318

7 Annotated Code of Maryland

8 (2014 Volume and 2015 Supplement)

9 Preamble

10 WHEREAS, James Ryder Randall, a native of Maryland, wrote the poem “Maryland!  
11 My Maryland!” during the early days of the Civil War when he was extremely despondent  
12 over the death of a friend who was shot while protesting Union troops as they marched  
13 through Baltimore; and

14 WHEREAS, Mr. Randall’s poem calls for Marylanders to take up arms and join the  
15 South in its battle against the Union and disparages Northerners and President Abraham  
16 Lincoln; and

17 WHEREAS, The poem was adopted by Southern troops as a battle hymn and  
18 remains one of this country’s most martial poems, the only state song calling for the  
19 overthrow of the government; and

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EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 WHEREAS, The poem was adopted as the State song in 1939 and has continued to  
 2 stir controversy, resulting in numerous legislative efforts over the years calling for its  
 3 repeal; and

4 WHEREAS, After close examination of the poem and the allegiance and motivations  
 5 of its author, it is clear that the poem, in its entirety, is inappropriate as a State song  
 6 inasmuch as it represents emotions that were characteristic of the most divided period in  
 7 this country's history; and

8 WHEREAS, John T. White, a native of Frederick County, also wrote a poem entitled  
 9 "Maryland, My Maryland" in 1894, which celebrates the natural beauty of this State, an  
 10 agreeable theme in which all Marylanders can take pride; and

11 WHEREAS, As many in this State make increased efforts to find common ground  
 12 and work together harmoniously in a nonpartisan manner, this State needs a song that  
 13 unites us moving forward and carries a theme that will endure over time; and

14 WHEREAS, The State Song Advisory Group, headed by the State Archivist,  
 15 convened in October 2015 and recommended alternatives to the current State song, one of  
 16 which is to revise the State song by merging select verses from Mr. Randall's and Mr.  
 17 White's poems that meet established State song criteria; now, therefore,

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

#### 20 Article – General Provisions

21 7–318.

22 (a) [The poem] **SELECT VERSES FROM THE POEMS** "Maryland! My Maryland!",  
 23 written by James Ryder Randall in 1861, **AND "MARYLAND, MY MARYLAND", WRITTEN**  
 24 **BY JOHN T. WHITE IN 1894**, and set to the tune of "Lauriger Horatius", [is] **ARE** the State  
 25 song.

26 (b) The words of the State song are:

#### 27 I

28 [The despot's heel is on thy shore,  
 29 Maryland!  
 30 His torch is at thy temple door,  
 31 Maryland!  
 32 Avenge the patriotic gore  
 33 That flecked the streets of Baltimore,  
 34 And be the battle queen of yore,  
 35 Maryland! My Maryland!

#### 36 II

1                   Hark to an exiled son's appeal,  
 2                   Maryland!  
 3                   My mother State! to thee I kneel,  
 4                   Maryland!  
 5                   For life and death, for woe and weal,  
 6                   Thy peerless chivalry reveal,  
 7                   And gird thy beauteous limbs with steel,  
 8                   Maryland! My Maryland!

## III]

9                   Thou wilt not cower in the dust,  
 10                   Maryland!  
 11                   Thy beaming sword shall never rust,  
 12                   Maryland!  
 13                   Remember Carroll's sacred trust,  
 14                   Remember Howard's warlike thrust,—  
 15                   And all thy slumberers with the just,  
 16                   Maryland! My Maryland!  
 17

## [IV

18                   Come! 'tis the red dawn of the day,  
 19                   Maryland!  
 20                   Come with thy panoplied array,  
 21                   Maryland!  
 22                   With Ringgold's spirit for the fray,  
 23                   With Watson's blood at Monterey,  
 24                   With fearless Lowe and dashing May,  
 25                   Maryland! My Maryland!  
 26

## V

27                   Come! for thy shield is bright and strong,  
 28                   Maryland!  
 29                   Come! for thy dalliance does thee wrong,  
 30                   Maryland!  
 31                   Come to thine own heroic throng,  
 32                   Stalking with Liberty along,  
 33                   And chaunt thy dauntless slogan song,  
 34                   Maryland! My Maryland!  
 35

## VI

36                   Dear Mother! burst the tyrant's chain,  
 37                   Maryland!  
 38                   Virginia should not call in vain,  
 39                   Maryland!  
 40                   She meets her sisters on the plain—  
 41                   “Sic semper!” 'tis the proud refrain  
 42                   That baffles minions back again,  
 43

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1 Maryland! My Maryland!

2 VII

3 I see the blush upon thy cheek,  
4 Maryland!

5 For thou wast ever bravely meek,  
6 Maryland!

7 But lo! there surges forth a shriek  
8 From hill to hill, from creek to creek—  
9 Potomac calls to Chesapeake,  
10 Maryland! My Maryland!

11 VIII

12 Thou wilt not yield the vandal toll,  
13 Maryland!

14 Thou wilt not crook to his control,  
15 Maryland!

16 Better the fire upon thee roll,  
17 Better the blade, the shot, the bowl,  
18 Than crucifixion of the soul,  
19 Maryland! My Maryland!

20 IX

21 I hear the distant thunder–hum,  
22 Maryland!

23 The Old Line's bugle, fife, and drum,  
24 Maryland!

25 She is not dead, nor deaf, nor dumb—  
26 Huzza! she spurns the Northern scum!  
27 She breathes! she burns! she'll come! she'll come!  
28 Maryland! My Maryland!]

29 II

30 “SAIL ON, SAIL ON, O SHIP OF STATE!”

31 MARYLAND, MY MARYLAND.

32 MAY WE, THY CHILDREN, MAKE THEE GREAT.

33 MARYLAND, MY MARYLAND.

34 MAY GRATITUDE OUR HEARTS POSSESS

35 AND BOLDLY WE THY CLAIMS EXPRESS,

36 AND BOW IN LOVING THANKFULNESS,

37 MARYLAND, MY MARYLAND!

38 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect  
39 October 1, 2016.