

HOUSE BILL 417

P1

6lr2567

By: **Delegates West and Hill**

Introduced and read first time: January 29, 2016

Assigned to: Health and Government Operations

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **State Song – Replacement – State Song Selection Panel and Competition**

3 FOR the purpose of establishing the State Song Selection Panel; providing for the
4 composition, chair, and staffing of the Panel; prohibiting a member of the Panel from
5 receiving certain compensation, but authorizing the reimbursement of certain
6 expenses; requiring the Panel to develop a plan for and conduct a certain State song
7 competition and to carry out certain tasks relating to the competition; authorizing
8 the Panel to solicit certain private contributions for a certain prize fund; requiring
9 the Panel to report the finalists of the State song competition to the Governor and
10 the General Assembly and to recommend certain legislation on or before a certain
11 date; providing for the termination of this Act; and generally relating to the State
12 song.

13 Preamble

14 WHEREAS, In 1939, the poem “Maryland! My Maryland!”, written by James Ryder
15 Randall in the early days of the Civil War, was set to the tune of “Lauriger Horatius” and
16 adopted as the official State song; and

17 WHEREAS, Mr. Randall wrote “Maryland! My Maryland!” to express his outrage at
18 the news of Union troops being marched through Baltimore and to articulate his
19 Confederate sympathies; and

20 WHEREAS, The words of Mr. Randall’s poem, which advocate the overthrow of the
21 government and disparage Northerners and President Abraham Lincoln, are controversial,
22 inappropriate, and do not represent the ideals and values of Marylanders today; and

23 WHEREAS, An official State song should reference the rich history and diversity of
24 the State and evoke images of the natural and scenic beauty that Marylanders celebrate;
25 and

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 WHEREAS, It is imperative that a new State song be adopted that honors the past,
2 celebrates the present, and anticipates the bright future of this State and its residents;
3 now, therefore,

4 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
5 That:

6 (a) There is a State Song Selection Panel.

7 (b) The Panel consists of the following members:

8 (1) two members of the Senate of Maryland, one of whom shall be from the
9 majority party and one of whom shall be from the minority party, appointed by the
10 President of the Senate;

11 (2) two members of the House of Delegates, one of whom shall be from the
12 majority party and one of whom shall be from the minority party, appointed by the Speaker
13 of the House;

14 (3) the State Superintendent of Schools, or the Superintendent's designee;

15 (4) the Chancellor of the University System of Maryland, or the
16 Chancellor's designee;

17 (5) the President of the Maryland Historical Society, or the President's
18 designee;

19 (6) the Chair of the Maryland State Arts Council, or the Chair's designee;

20 (7) the Chair of the Maryland Humanities Council, or the Chair's designee;

21 (8) the Poet Laureate of the State; and

22 (9) three residents of the State who have expertise in the area of
23 songwriting and composition, one each appointed by:

24 (i) the Governor;

25 (ii) the President of the Senate; and

26 (iii) the Speaker of the House of Delegates.

27 (c) The Governor shall designate the chair of the Panel.

28 (d) The Maryland State Arts Council shall provide staff for the Panel.

29 (e) A member of the Panel:

1 (1) may not receive compensation as a member of the Panel; but

2 (2) is entitled to reimbursement for expenses under the Standard State
3 Travel Regulations, as provided in the State budget.

4 (f) (1) The Panel shall:

5 (i) develop a plan for and conduct a State song competition in which
6 contestants, either individually or as a group, may submit to the Panel a song about the
7 State of Maryland;

8 (ii) develop rules and guidelines for the State song competition,
9 including:

10 1. the song shall be an original song that is written and
11 composed by the contestant;

12 2. the song shall be dignified, singable, and evoke visual
13 images of Maryland's history, diversity, and natural beauty; and

14 3. the contestant shall agree to surrender to the State any
15 copyrights to the song's composition, arrangement, or lyrics;

16 (iii) select no more than three finalists from the number of
17 contestants who submitted a song to the State song competition and complied with
18 competition rules and guidelines, giving preference to contestants who are residents of the
19 State; and

20 (iv) promote the State song competition on the Maryland State Arts
21 Council Web site and through media outlets.

22 (2) The Panel may solicit private contributions for a prize fund in an
23 amount not to exceed \$5,000 to be awarded to the winner of the State song competition, as
24 determined under subsection (g)(2) of this section.

25 (g) On or before December 1, 2016, the Panel shall:

26 (1) report the finalists of the State song competition to the Governor and,
27 in accordance with § 2-1246 of the State Government Article, the General Assembly; and

28 (2) recommend legislation to be introduced in the 2017 Regular Session of
29 the General Assembly that designates each of the finalists of the State song competition,
30 thus enabling the General Assembly to choose the official State song by passing one of the
31 bills recommended by the Panel.

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1 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July
2 1, 2016. It shall remain effective for a period of 1 year and, at the end of June 30, 2017,
3 with no further action required by the General Assembly, this Act shall be abrogated and
4 of no further force and effect.