

Department of Legislative Services
 Maryland General Assembly
 2025 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

House Bill 77 (Delegate Bouchat, *et al.*)
 Health and Government Operations

Commission to Study African American Civil War Sailors in Maryland

This bill establishes the Commission to Study African American Civil War Sailors in Maryland. The commission must (1) study the history of African American Civil War sailors who fought for the Union Navy in Maryland, including muster rolls, locations of services, and all distinguished honors and recognitions awarded and (2) make findings and recommendations regarding the funding, design, construction, and location of an appropriate memorial dedicated to the African American Civil War sailors in Maryland. The Maryland State Archives (MSA) must staff the commission. A member of the commission may not receive compensation but is entitled to reimbursement for expenses. By December 1, 2025, the commission must report its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2025, and terminates June 30, 2026.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: General fund expenditures increase by \$66,200 only in FY 2026 for contractual support to staff the commission and complete the required report. Expense reimbursements for commission members are assumed to be minimal and absorbable within existing budgeted resources. No effect on revenues.

(in dollars)	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029	FY 2030
Revenues	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
GF Expenditure	66,200	0	0	0	0
Net Effect	(\$66,200)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Note:() = decrease; GF = general funds; FF = federal funds; SF = special funds; - = indeterminate increase; (-) = indeterminate decrease

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law:

Commission to Study African American Civil War Soldiers in Maryland

Chapter 434 of 2024 established the Commission to Study African American Civil War Soldiers in Maryland. Virtually identical to the requirements proposed under the bill, the commission was required to (1) study the history of African American Civil War soldiers who fought for the Union Army in Maryland, including muster rolls, locations of services, and all distinguished honors and recognitions awarded and (2) make findings and recommendations regarding the funding, design, construction, and location of an appropriate memorial dedicated to the African American Civil War soldiers in Maryland. MSA staffed the commission. By December 1, 2024, the commission was required to report its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly; that report, which includes a discussion on African Americans serving in the U.S. Navy, can be read [here](#).

Commission on African American History and Culture

The Commission on African American History and Culture, among its other powers and duties, must operate the Banneker-Douglass-Tubman Museum in Annapolis to house and display photographs, objects, oral history tapes, artifacts, and other materials of African American historic and cultural significance. The commission may seek money from the federal government, foundations, and private sources in addition to State financing. It may accept gifts, grants, donations, bequests, or endowments for any of its purposes.

Governor's Commission on Maryland Military Monuments

Established by executive order and administered by the Maryland Department of Planning, the Governor's Commission on Maryland Military Monuments must undertake an inventory of Maryland military monuments, as specified. The commission must make a determination, based on historical significance, design, financial need, and physical condition, as to which monument must receive assistance with the cost of restoration. The commission must procure sufficient funds for the restoration of the monuments, including contributions secured from grants and fundraising efforts, and must prepare education and tourism materials for public distribution.

State Expenditures: MSA advises it is unable to absorb additional duties and has determined that one temporary contractual staff member is needed to staff the commission.

Given the limited timeframe for the commission to produce its report and the intricacy of the commission's duties, the Department of Legislative Services concurs.

Thus, MSA general fund expenditures increase by \$66,169 in fiscal 2026, which accounts for the bill's July 1, 2025 effective date. This estimate reflects the cost of hiring one contractual archivist trainee to staff the commission and produce the mandatory report, which includes travel costs in order to research relevant historical sites and locations for a memorial. It includes a salary, fringe benefits, one-time start-up costs, travel and historical site visit costs, and operating expenses.

Contractual Position	1.0
Salary and Fringe Benefits	\$55,502
Travel and Historical Site Visit Costs	3,022
Operating Expenses	<u>7,645</u>
Total FY 2026 State Expenditures	\$66,169

This estimate assumes that the contractual position terminates June 30, 2026, concurrent with the termination of the commission.

This estimate does not include any health insurance costs that could be incurred for specified contractual employees under the State's implementation of the federal Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

Additional Information

Recent Prior Introductions: Similar legislation has not been introduced within the last three years.

Designated Cross File: SB 13 (Senator Muse) - Education, Energy, and the Environment.

Information Source(s): Maryland State Archives; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - January 13, 2025
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