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March 12, 2020  
HB867— State Designations – State Tartan

Chairman Pendergrass, Vice Chairman Peña-Melnyk, and fellow members of the committee:

On July 20, 1969, Neil Armstrong became the first person to walk on the moon. He took with him a scrap of Armstrong tartan on his historic space flight.

John Paul Jones, the Father of the American Navy was a Scotsman.

Of the 45 men who have served as President of the United States, an astonishing 33 have been of either Scottish or Ulster-Scots descent.

Nineteen of the 56 delegates who signed the Declaration of Independence were from Scotland, Ulster Scots or, like Thomas Jefferson, had family there.

The Colony of Maryland was founded in 1632 by King Charles the 1st of the Scottish House of Stuart. Maryland is named for Queen Henrietta Maria. Of the 2,316 named communities in Maryland, 410 of them or 18%, of their names are based on or are named directly after locations in Scotland. Aberdeen, Cylburn, Dunbar, Edmonson, Glen Arm, Glen Ellen, Glen Bernie, Highlandtown, Loch Haven, Loch Raven and Waverly to name just a few.

Tartans have long been associated with membership in a group or associated with a specific region. Martin Martin in his 1702 book, *A Description of the Western Islands of Scotland* wrote:

“Tartans are used to distinguish the inhabitants of different regions. The tartan itself has historically been a symbol of standing up to oppression and showing solidarity with defenders of freedom.”

Should not the Free State show the same solidarity?

A Maryland State Tartan would not only provide an additional way to show Maryland Pride, as has occurred through our already popular Maryland flag, it could encourage further branding and tourism associated with all things Scottish and/or Irish here in Maryland, as well as be a morale boosting accessory used by organizations that have historically had an association with Scottish and/or Irish culture.

This bill would be required to create an official District Tartan, which is a tartan associated with a particular geographical area, including towns, parishes, counties or countries.

Just 25 days from now, April 6th, is not only the final day of our 90 day session. It is also National Tartan Day, and a fine day to have Maryland join the 24 other states with its own official tartan. HB 867 requests the State of Maryland designate a State Tartan, and I respectfully request a favorable report.

Sincerely,  
Delegate Kenneth P. Kerr  
District 3B – Frederick County