



March 12, 2020

HB867— State Designations – State Tartan

Good afternoon Chair Pendergrass, Vice-Chair Peña-Melnyk, and all committee members and thank you for having me today. Many thanks to Delegate Kerr for inviting me to speak in support of House Bill 867, which would make official the Maryland State Tartan.

My name is Andrew Donlon, and I am the Executive Director of the MacMillan United Pipe Bands, the nation's largest privately funded nonprofit bagpipe band organization. Our organization, based in Montgomery County is comprised of over 100 members who perform in one of our three competitive bagpipe bands across the United States, and in Canada, Ireland and the United Kingdom. Our flagship MacMillan Pipe Band is among the top 5 bands in the nation, and competes regularly at the World Pipe Band Championships in Glasgow, Scotland.

What some may not know, is that Maryland has a rich history of highly successful bagpipe bands. Starting with the US Air Force Pipe Band in the 1950's, Maryland has led the bagpiping community in the United States for decades. The members of the Air Force band created a group that would ultimately win the World Pipe Band Championships in 1999, a band that rehearsed in Montgomery and Prince George's counties for many years.

My organization, the MacMillan United Pipe Bands has taken the mantle as the top band in the region, as well as one of the international leaders in educating others how to play. Members of our organization are the instructors of nearly every public safety oriented pipe band in Maryland including the Baltimore Fire Brigade Pipes and Drums, the Howard County Police Pipe Band, the Montgomery County Fire Pipe Band, the Montgomery County Police Pipe Band and more. We strive to share the music and culture of Scotland and Ireland throughout Maryland and around the world, and can safely say that from our perspective, interest in Scottish music and culture is strong.

Dozens of States have designated "State Tartans" with the Scottish Registry, and I believe that our organization, other Maryland based pipe bands, cultural groups and members of the Scottish diaspora will be enthralled that Maryland has an official state tartan. I ask that you support House Bill 867 and thank you for your time.

Respectfully,

Andrew Donlon  
Executive Director  
MacMillan United Pipe Bands, Inc.