

CHERYL C. KAGAN
Legislative District 17
Montgomery County

Vice Chair
Education, Health, and
Environmental Affairs Committee

Joint Audit Committee
Joint Committee on Federal Relations



Miller Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street, Suite 2 West
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
301-858-3134 · 410-841-3134
800-492-7122 Ext. 3134
Fax 301-858-3665 · 410-841-3665
Cheryl.Kagan@senate.state.md.us

THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

SB8: General Provisions – State Song – Repeal
Thursday, March 11, 2021 at 1pm
Senate Education, Health, And Environmental Affairs Committee

Maryland's State Song contains offensive lyrics that defend slavery and glorify an era of racial discrimination. Several have attempted to repeal and/or replace "[Maryland, My Maryland](#)," including my own efforts with [SB222](#) in 2016 and [SB790](#) in 2018.

[SB8](#) would finally repeal our State Song.

The poem that provided the song's lyrics was written in 1861 by a Confederate sympathizer, James Ryder Randall. He was outraged by Union troops marching through Baltimore to overthrow the government. President Abraham Lincoln is called a "despot," and those opposing the Confederacy are called "Northern scum." Even prior to its adoption in 1939 as the State Song, the poem was viewed as inflammatory and divisive.

Maryland's residents swell with state pride. Our flag is on countless items ranging from team uniforms, home decorations, bumper stickers, and even COVID-19 masks. Most state songs reference the beauty of the land, the pride in history, and the strength of the people. If nothing else, it is a shame that ours does not.

In the wake of George Floyd's murder and the Black Lives Matter protests, many states have removed their Confederate statues and symbols. As a progressive state, it is imperative that Maryland cut ties with this deplorable ode to the Confederacy.

Words matter. I urge a favorable report on SB8.