

History of Legislation Introduced to Change the State Song

The state song lyrics are currently found in the Maryland Annotated Code, in the General Provisions Article, §7-318. The state song lyrics were first codified by Chapter 451 of the 1939 Laws of Maryland. Since [Chapter 451 of 1939](#) was passed before Maryland started to keep legislative history records, there is not much documentation to show why the law was enacted. The House and Senate Journal Proceedings, however, show that the bill passed its third reading unanimously in both houses.

Newspaper articles from the time period seem to indicate that the song was extremely popular and that the song was unofficially considered the State Song for some time before 1939. There was an attempt to pass a bill naming “Maryland, My Maryland” the state song in 1935, but it was [vetoed by the Governor](#): “I see nothing to be gained by such legislation. This song has, for many years, been played and will continue to be played as long as it appeals to the people, irrespective of legislation on the subject.” The 1939 bill was signed by the next governor.

One opinion piece from 1939 pointed out that “Maryland, My Maryland” was a song celebrating the Confederacy and disparaging the United States government.

Since the 1970s, several attempts have been introduced to repeal, modify, or otherwise necessitate change to the song’s lyrics.

The first attempts at changes to the song were considered in 1974, 1980, and 1984. The following bills and resolutions, none of which passed, were as follows:

1974: SJR 5

1980: SB 18; HB 1821

1984: SB 446; HJR 22

The next attempts at change were introduced in the early 2000s. The bills that sought to make changes, none of which passed, were as follows:

2001: [HB 1057](#)

2002: [SB 19](#)

2009: [SB 892/HB 1241](#)

Recently, several bills sought to make modifications, none of which passed:

2016: [SB 49/HB 215](#) – K. Young Changes current verse II to I, Adds a neutral vs II and removes all the rest

2016: [SB 222](#)

2016: [HB 417](#) – West and Hill -States Art Council shall conduct a contest

2018 session:

[SB 588](#)

[SB 790](#)

[SB 1018/HB 608 - A. Hayes – names Sean Tully’s 2017 song, which removes verses and changes lyrics but retains the current songs melody, as the state song](#)

[HB 508 – K. Reznik - see 2020](#)

2019 session:

[HB 128 – K Reznik – see 2020](#)

[HB 181 – K. Reznik Commision to recommend lyrics and melody based on public submission and hearings](#)

The above referenced newspaper articles, journal entries, copies of legislation, and committee bill file information from the legislation referenced can found [here](#).