

**BRIAN E. FROSH**  
*Attorney General*



**ELIZABETH F. HARRIS**  
*Chief Deputy Attorney General*

**CAROLYN QUATTROCKI**  
*Deputy Attorney General*

**STATE OF MARYLAND**  
**OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL**

FACSIMILE NO.

WRITER'S DIRECT DIAL NO.

410-576-6584

February 24, 2021

TO: The Honorable Shane E. Pendergrass  
Chair, Health and Government Operations Committee

FROM: Hannibal G. Williams II Kemerer  
Chief Counsel, Legislative Affairs, Office of the Attorney General

RE: HB389: General Provisions - State Song - Repeal and Competition (**SUPPORT**)  
HB667: General Provisions – State Song – Repeal (**SUPPORT**)

---

There is no dispute that when James Ryder Randall wrote “Maryland, My Maryland” in 1891, he was expressing sympathy for the Confederacy and objecting to the Union troops who had entered Baltimore in the early days of the Civil War. Indeed, the song was used as a Confederate battle hymn and advocated the overthrow of the U.S. government. It is a reflection of our state’s racist past and must finally be retired. For years, the General Assembly has attempted to repeal and/or replace the State Song to no avail. This session, as the country experiences sustained protests against police brutality and systemic racism and just weeks ago witnessed the real horror of a hate-fueled riot on the U.S. Capitol, we can no longer afford to ignore this divisive anthem.

House Bills 389 and 667 both seek to repeal the State song, and HB389 includes a process for replacing it. Either proposal is fine with us.

For the foregoing reasons, the Office of Attorney General urges a favorable report on HB 389 and HB 667.

cc: Members of the Health and Government Operations Committee

