

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2013 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 37 (Delegate Nathan-Pulliam, *et al.*)
Health and Government Operations

Rules

State Government - Commemorative Days - Maryland Centenarians Day

This bill requires the Governor to annually proclaim the second Thursday in May as Maryland Centenarians Day.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Commemorating Maryland Centenarians Day does not affect State finances.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: Nine official commemorative days and three months are recognized in State law as shown in **Exhibit 1**. The Governor also must issue a proclamation each year encouraging citizens and other individuals to observe a moment of silence at 3 p.m. on Memorial Day to unite in remembrance and commemorate the heroic acts and efforts of Marylanders who have served and died in the U.S. Armed Forces.

Background: A centenarian is someone who has reached the landmark age of 100 years. Because current average life expectancies around the world are less than 100 years, the term is invariably associated with longevity. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, in 2010, there were approximately 53,400 centenarians living in the United States and 900 living in Maryland.

Exhibit 1
Official Commemorative Days and Months in Maryland

Asian Lunar New Year Day ¹	January/February
Black History Month	February
Women’s History Month	March
Crime Victim and Advocate Day	April 3
John Hanson’s Birthday ²	April 13
Negro Baseball League Day ³	May
Law Day	May 1
Fire, Rescue, and Emergency Services Workers Day ⁴	June
Maryland Charter Day	June 20
Hispanic Heritage Month ⁵	September/October
Poetry Day	October 15
Annapolis Charter Day	December 17

¹Day designated as new year on the Asian lunar calendar.

²John Hanson served as the first president of the Continental Congress under the Articles of Confederation from 1781 to 1782.

³Commemorated on the second Saturday in May.

⁴Commemorated on the first Sunday in June.

⁵Commemorated from September 15 to October 15.

Source: Department of Legislative Services

In 1963, President John F. Kennedy designated May as Senior Citizens Month; in 1980, President Jimmy Carter changed the designation to Older Americans Month. Every president since Kennedy has issued a formal proclamation asking the national to pay tribute to older people in their communities during the month of May.

For the past 19 years, the Maryland Centenarian Committee, Inc. has held a recognition luncheon on the second Thursday in May for Maryland citizens who have reached or surpassed the landmark age of 100.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: SB 73 of 2012 passed the Senate; however, no action was taken in the House. Its cross file, HB 244, received a hearing in the House Health and Government Operations Committee, but no further action was taken.

Cross File: SB 175 (Senator Kelley, *et al.*) – Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs.

Information Source(s): Maryland Department of Planning, U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Administration on Aging, *The Baltimore Sun*, Department of Legislative Services

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