

SENATE BILL 27

P1

6lr0795

(PRE-FILED)

By: **Senator Cassilly**

Requested: September 30, 2015

Introduced and read first time: January 13, 2016

Assigned to: Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **State Designations – State Duck – Canvasback**

3 FOR the purpose of designating the canvasback duck as the State duck; and generally
4 relating to a State duck.

5 BY adding to
6 Article – General Provisions
7 Section 7–304.1
8 Annotated Code of Maryland
9 (2014 Volume and 2015 Supplement)

10 Preamble

11 WHEREAS, The Chesapeake Bay's Susquehanna Flats was once the winter home of
12 about half of North America's canvasback duck population, whose numbers were so vast in
13 the 19th century, given the shoals' lush beds of wild celery, that market hunters in the
14 1870s bagged as many as 15,000 each day and shipped them in canvas bags by boxcar to
15 markets from Baltimore to Boston; and

16 WHEREAS, It was the seemingly infinite abundance of this premier North American
17 game bird on the Flats and their near annihilation by unregulated harvesting that helped
18 inspire Congress to enact the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918, which empowered the
19 federal government to set seasons and bag limits on the hunting of migratory game birds;
20 and

21 WHEREAS, The decline of submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV) in the Chesapeake
22 Bay, where canvasbacks find wild celery, their principal food supply, has also contributed
23 to the sad demise of these magnificent game birds whose numbers today are only a small
24 fraction of their historic numbers; and

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 WHEREAS, A key goal of Maryland's multibillion dollar commitment to the
2 Chesapeake Bay restoration effort is the return of SAV, a critical prerequisite for growing
3 and sustaining the canvasback population; and

4 WHEREAS, For sportsmen and sportswomen alike, a true measure of a healthy
5 Chesapeake Bay means the return of its most iconic symbol so that future generations can
6 witness in awe what it was like in the 19th century to see canvasbacks, or "cans", darken
7 the skies over the Flats; now, therefore,

8 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
9 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

10 **Article – General Provisions**

11 **7–304.1.**

12 **THE CANVASBACK (AYTHYA VALISINERIA) IS THE STATE DUCK.**

13 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
14 October 1, 2016.