

HOUSE BILL 448

P1

1lr0377

By: **Delegate Harrison**

Introduced and read first time: January 15, 2021

Assigned to: Health and Government Operations

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **State Government – Legal and Employee Holiday – Juneteenth National**
3 **Freedom Day**

4 FOR the purpose of designating a certain day for Juneteenth National Freedom Day as a
5 State legal holiday and State employee holiday; repealing the requirement that the
6 Governor declare a certain day as Juneteenth National Freedom Day; and generally
7 relating to Juneteenth National Freedom Day.

8 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,

9 Article – General Provisions

10 Section 1–111

11 Annotated Code of Maryland

12 (2019 Replacement Volume and 2020 Supplement)

13 BY repealing

14 Article – General Provisions

15 Section 7–411

16 Annotated Code of Maryland

17 (2019 Replacement Volume and 2020 Supplement)

18 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,

19 Article – State Personnel and Pensions

20 Section 9–201

21 Annotated Code of Maryland

22 (2015 Replacement Volume and 2020 Supplement)

23 Preamble

24 WHEREAS, The holiday of “Juneteenth” celebrates the notification on June 19,
25 1865, to the last slaves, in the state of Texas, that President Abraham Lincoln had signed
26 the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863; and

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 WHEREAS, Juneteenth has come to symbolize for many African Americans the
2 triumph of the human spirit over the cruelty of slavery; and

3 WHEREAS, Beginning in 1997, the United States Senate adopted a joint resolution
4 recognizing Juneteenth as the true Independence Day for African American citizens, and
5 in recent years both the Senate and the United States House of Representatives have
6 passed annual resolutions commemorating June 19 as Juneteenth Independence Day; and

7 WHEREAS, Juneteenth is celebrated annually in more than 205 cities,
8 commemorated in 47 states, and designated as a paid state holiday in Texas; and

9 WHEREAS, When the Maryland legislature passed a resolution on November 1,
10 1864, freeing all slaves in the State, Baltimore was the African American capital of the
11 United States, with the 30,000 free blacks in Baltimore City and 5,400 slaves in the State
12 making up 13 to 15 percent of the population of the State; and

13 WHEREAS, It is important to the descendants of those free blacks and slaves, to all
14 other African American citizens of Maryland, and to all citizens of Maryland regardless of
15 their racial or ethnic background that this important moment in our country's and our
16 State's history be formally recognized within the State; now, therefore,

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

19 **Article – General Provisions**

20 1–111.

21 (a) In this Code and any regulation or directive adopted under it, “legal holiday”
22 means:

23 (1) January 1, for New Year's Day;

24 (2) (i) January 15, for Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday; or

25 (ii) if the United States Congress designates another day for
26 observance of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday, the day designated by the United
27 States Congress;

28 (3) February 12, for Lincoln's birthday;

29 (4) the third Monday in February, for Washington's birthday;

30 (5) March 25, for Maryland Day;

31 (6) Good Friday;

- 1 (7) (i) May 30, for Memorial Day; or
- 2 (ii) if the United States Congress designates another day for
- 3 observance of Memorial Day, the day designated by the United States Congress;
- 4 (8) **JUNE 19, FOR JUNETEENTH NATIONAL FREEDOM DAY;**
- 5 (9) July 4, for Independence Day;
- 6 [(9)] (10) the first Monday in September, for Labor Day;
- 7 [(10)] (11) September 12, for Defenders’ Day;
- 8 [(11)] (12) (i) October 12, for Columbus Day; or
- 9 (ii) if the United States Congress designates another day for
- 10 observance of Columbus Day, the day designated by the United States Congress;
- 11 [(12)] (13) November 11, for Veterans’ Day;
- 12 [(13)] (14) the fourth Thursday in November, for Thanksgiving Day;
- 13 [(14)] (15) the Friday after Thanksgiving Day, for American Indian
- 14 Heritage Day;
- 15 [(15)] (16) December 25, for Christmas Day;
- 16 [(16)] (17) each statewide general election day in the State; and
- 17 [(17)] (18) each other day that the President of the United States or the
- 18 Governor designates for general cessation of business.
- 19 (b) Except as otherwise expressly provided in the Code, a legal holiday shall be
- 20 observed on:
- 21 (1) the date specified in subsection (a) of this section; or
- 22 (2) if that date falls on a Sunday, on the next Monday after that date.

23 [7–411.

24 The Governor annually shall proclaim June 19 as Juneteenth National Freedom
 25 Day.]

1 9–201.

2 In this title, “employee holiday” includes:

3 (1) January 1, for New Year’s Day;

4 (2) January 15, for Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s birthday, unless the
5 United States Congress designates another day for observance of that legal holiday, in
6 which case, the day designated by the United States Congress;

7 (3) the third Monday in February, for Presidents’ Day;

8 (4) May 30, for Memorial Day, unless the United States Congress
9 designates another day for observance of that legal holiday, in which case, the day
10 designated by the United States Congress;

11 (5) **JUNE 19, FOR JUNETEENTH NATIONAL FREEDOM DAY;**

12 (6) July 4, for Independence Day;

13 [(6)] (7) the first Monday in September, for Labor Day;

14 [(7)] (8) October 12, for Columbus Day, unless the United States
15 Congress designates another day for observance of that legal holiday, in which case, the
16 day designated by the United States Congress;

17 [(8)] (9) November 11, for Veterans’ Day;

18 [(9)] (10) the fourth Thursday in November, for Thanksgiving Day;

19 [(10)] (11) the Friday after Thanksgiving Day, for American Indian
20 Heritage Day;

21 [(11)] (12) December 25, for Christmas Day;

22 [(12)] (13) each statewide general election day in this State; and

23 [(13)] (14) each other day that the President of the United States or the
24 Governor designates for general cessation of business.

25 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect June
26 1, 2021.