

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2011 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

Senate Bill 815 (Senator Reilly)
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

State Government - Commemorative Month - Irish-American Heritage Month

This bill requires the Governor to annually proclaim the month of October as Irish-American Heritage Month and to urge educational and cultural organizations to observe Irish-American Heritage Month with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2011.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Commemorating Irish-American Heritage Month does not affect governmental finances.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: Eight 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: Irish-Americans comprise one of the largest self-reported ancestral groups in the State, as well as in the nation. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, more than

10% of Marylanders are of Irish-American descent. Irish-Americans have been highly influential in American history and society, and a number of Irish-American parades are held annually in major cities across the United States to celebrate St. Patrick's Day in March.

The U.S. Congress first designated March as Irish-American Heritage Month in 1991. Each year since 1991, the President of the United States has annually proclaimed March to be Irish-American Heritage Month.

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
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.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): U.S. Census Bureau (2005-2009 American Community Survey), Department of Legislative Services

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Analysis by: Jennifer A. Ellick

Direct Inquiries to:
(410) 946-5510
(301) 970-5510