

Department of Legislative Services  
2016 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE  
First Reader

Senate Bill 620 (Senator Middleton, *et al.*)  
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

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Commemorative Weeks - Chesapeake Bay Awareness Week

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This bill requires the Governor to annually proclaim the second week in June as Chesapeake Bay Awareness Week. The proclamation must urge educational and environmental organizations to observe Chesapeake Bay Awareness Week properly with appropriate events, activities, and programs designed to increase awareness of the importance of the Chesapeake Bay to the State, the region, and the United States.

The bill takes effect June 1, 2016.

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Fiscal Summary

**State Effect:** None. Urging educational and environmental organizations to observe Chesapeake Bay Awareness Week does not affect State finances.

**Local Effect:** None.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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Analysis

**Current Law:** Twelve official commemorative days and six 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.

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**Exhibit 1**  
**Official Commemorative Days and Months in Maryland**

|   |                   |
|---|-------------------|
| Asian Lunar New Year Day <sup>1</sup>                         | January/February  |
| Black History Month   | February          |
| Irish-American Heritage Month                                 | March             |
| Women's History Month   | March             |
| Crime Victim and Advocate Day                                 | April 3           |
| John Hanson's Birthday <sup>2</sup>                           | April 13          |
| Maryland Centenarians Day <sup>3</sup>                        | May               |
| Negro Baseball League Day <sup>4</sup>                        | May               |
| Law Day   | May 1             |
| Fire, Rescue, and Emergency Services Workers Day <sup>5</sup> | June              |
| Juneteenth National Freedom Day                               | June 19           |
| Maryland Charter Day  | June 20           |
| Hispanic Heritage Month <sup>6</sup>                          | September/October |
| German-American Heritage Month                                | October           |
| Poetry Day  | October 15        |
| American Indian Heritage Month                                | November          |
| Maryland Emancipation Day                                     | November 1        |
| Annapolis Charter Day   | December 17       |

<sup>1</sup>Day designated as new year on the Asian lunar calendar.

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

<sup>3</sup>Commemorated on the second Thursday in May.

<sup>4</sup>Commemorated on the second Saturday in May.

<sup>5</sup>Commemorated on the first Sunday in June.

<sup>6</sup>Commemorated from September 15 to October 15.

Source: Department of Legislative Services

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**Background:** The Chesapeake Bay is the largest estuary in the United States, spanning six states and the District of Columbia. Fed by 50 major tributaries, the bay contains more than 15 trillion gallons of water and produces more than 500 million pounds of seafood harvest annually, including crabs, oysters, and rockfish. The Chesapeake Bay area is home to more than 17 million people, 3,600 species of plants and animals, and two of the five major shipping ports in the North Atlantic: Baltimore and Hampton Roads. The bay provides important economic resources, as well as recreational and educational experiences both in and around the water.

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## **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Cross File:** HB 1319 (Delegate Frush, *et al.*) - Health and Government Operations.

**Information Source(s):** Chesapeake Bay Foundation, Chesapeake Bay Program,  
Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - March 2, 2016  
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