

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 5

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By: **Senator Simonaire**

Introduced and read first time: January 30, 2014

Assigned to: Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION

1 A Senate Joint Resolution concerning

2 **Commemoration of the 60th Anniversary of the Addition of “Under God” to**
3 **the Pledge of Allegiance**

4 FOR the purpose of commemorating the 60th anniversary of the addition of “under
5 God” to the Pledge of Allegiance.

6 WHEREAS, The year 2014 marks the 60th anniversary of the addition of the
7 phrase “under God” to the Pledge of Allegiance, and it is truly fitting to observe this
8 important achievement in the legacy of our country; and

9 WHEREAS, The effort to amend the Pledge of Allegiance to add the phrase
10 “under God” began on April 20, 1953, when U.S. Congressman Louis C. Rabaut
11 introduced House Joint Resolution 243; and

12 WHEREAS, Although 17 additional members of the U.S. House of
13 Representatives introduced similar measures, all of which failed to pass, momentum
14 for the cause continued to grow, and in February 1954, U.S. Senator Homer Ferguson
15 introduced a joint resolution to add “under God” to the pledge; and

16 WHEREAS, In the same month, President Dwight D. Eisenhower attended a
17 service held at New York Avenue Presbyterian Church commemorating the birth of
18 Abraham Lincoln, during which the minister delivered a sermon titled “Under God”, in
19 which he referenced the Gettysburg Address and specifically called attention to the
20 fact that President Lincoln had said “that this nation, under God, shall have a new
21 birth of Freedom”, after which the minister stated that “there is something missing
22 from the pledge”; and

23 WHEREAS, The minister’s sermon helped convince President Eisenhower that
24 adding “under God” to the pledge was the right thing to do; and

25 WHEREAS, On June 8, 1954, Congress unanimously approved House Joint
26 Resolution 243 and, on Flag Day the following week, President Eisenhower signed it



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1 into law, with a brief statement that included the words, “In this way we are
2 reaffirming the transcendence of religious faith in America’s heritage and future...”;
3 and

4 WHEREAS, The Pledge of Allegiance is an integral part of this nation’s
5 identity, introduced to American school children in their primary years and recited at
6 major national events, and the inclusion of “under God” in the pledge’s bold and
7 moving language demonstrates our commitment to the spiritual values on which the
8 United States was founded; now, therefore, be it

9 RESOLVED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That the
10 General Assembly commemorates the 60th Anniversary of the addition of “under God”
11 to the Pledge of Allegiance; and be it further

12 RESOLVED, That the General Assembly encourages Marylanders to learn more
13 about this chapter in their history; and be it further

14 RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be forwarded by the Department of
15 Legislative Services to the Honorable Martin O’Malley, Governor of Maryland; the
16 Honorable Thomas V. Mike Miller, Jr., President of the Senate of Maryland; and the
17 Honorable Michael E. Busch, Speaker of the House of Delegates.