

Department of Legislative Services  
2015 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

Senate Bill 422 (Senator Rosapepe)  
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

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**General Provisions - Commemorative Days - South Asian American Heritage Day**

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This bill requires the Governor to annually proclaim October 2 as South Asian American Heritage Day. The proclamation must urge educational and cultural organizations to observe South Asian American Heritage Day properly with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** Commemorating South Asian American Heritage Day 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.

**Background:** Maryland is a dynamic and culturally diverse State comprising people from around 160 different countries. Maryland has the tenth highest concentration of foreign-born residents in the nation. Over 14% of Maryland's residents are foreign-born compared to 13.1% nationally. Factors leading to a high share of foreign-born residents

include the proximity to the nation's capital, a relatively strong and diverse economy, leading institutions of higher education, and progressive State and local policies.

A sizeable portion of Maryland's foreign-born community consists of South Asian Americans. Based on 2013 U.S. Census data, there are approximately 114,000 South Asian Americans living in Maryland, which represents one-third of the total Asian American population in Maryland. Countries that comprise South Asia include Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. **Exhibit 2** lists the number of South Asian Americans residing in Maryland by national origin. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, Maryland residents from South Asia tend to be highly educated, with over 70% of adults having a college degree, with 40% having an advanced graduate or professional college degree. Less than 7.4% of South Asians do not have a high school diploma. Due to their high level of educational attainment, over 65% of Maryland residents from South Asia are employed in management, business, science, and arts-related occupations.

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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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**Exhibit 2**  
**Number of South Asian Americans Residing in Maryland**

<u>Country</u>	<u>Number of Residents</u>	<u>Share of Total Asian Population</u>
Bangladesh	3,773	1.1%
Bhutan	75	0.0%
India	79,072	22.3%
Maldives	n/a	n/a
Nepal	4,572	1.3%
Pakistan	21,775	6.1%
Sri Lanka	4,521	1.3%
<i>Subtotal – South Asians</i>	<i>113,788</i>	<i>32.1%</i>
<b>Total – Asians</b>	<b>354,430</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013

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**Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** SB 588 of 2014 received a hearing in the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee, but no further action was taken. Its cross file, HB 475, passed the House and received a hearing in the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee, but no further action was taken.

**Cross File:** HB 746 (Delegate Barve, *et al.*) – Health and Government Operations.

**Information Source(s):** U.S. Census Bureau, Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - March 1, 2015  
min/hlb

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