

# HOUSE BILL 608

P1

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By: **Delegate Hayes**

Introduced and read first time: January 29, 2018

Assigned to: Health and Government Operations

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## A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **State Government – State Song – Revision**

3 FOR the purpose of revising the State song; and generally relating to the State song.

4 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,

5 Article – General Provisions

6 Section 7–318

7 Annotated Code of Maryland

8 (2014 Volume and 2017 Supplement)

9 Preamble

10 WHEREAS, James Ryder Randall, a native of Maryland, wrote the poem “Maryland!  
11 My Maryland!” during the early days of the Civil War when he was extremely despondent  
12 over the death of a friend who was shot while protesting Union troops as they marched  
13 through Baltimore; and

14 WHEREAS, Mr. Randall’s poem calls for Marylanders to take up arms and join the  
15 South in its battle against the Union and disparages Northerners and President Abraham  
16 Lincoln; and

17 WHEREAS, The poem was adopted by Southern troops as a battle hymn and  
18 remains one of this country’s most martial poems, the only state song calling for the  
19 overthrow of the government; and

20 WHEREAS, The poem was adopted as the State song in 1939 and has continued to  
21 stir controversy, resulting in numerous legislative efforts over the years calling for its  
22 repeal; and

23 WHEREAS, After close examination of the poem and the allegiance and motivations  
24 of its author, it is clear that the poem, in its entirety, is inappropriate as a State song

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EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 inasmuch as it represents emotions that were characteristic of the most divided period in  
2 this country's history; and

3 WHEREAS, The third stanza of Mr. Randall's poem is considered by many not to be  
4 offensive, as it highlights the admirable qualities of bravery and perseverance, while  
5 honoring two great Marylanders, Charles Carroll, a signer of the Declaration of  
6 Independence, and John Eager Howard, an American Revolutionary War hero; and

7 WHEREAS, As many in this State make increased efforts to find common ground  
8 and work together harmoniously in a nonpartisan manner, this State needs a song that  
9 unites us moving forward and carries a theme that will endure over time; and

10 WHEREAS, The State Song Advisory Group, headed by the State Archivist,  
11 convened in October 2015 and recommended alternatives to the current State song,  
12 including a recommendation that the third verse of Mr. Randall's poem could be retained  
13 in combination with new lyrics; and

14 WHEREAS, The State Song Advisory Group recommended selection criteria to be  
15 used in evaluating candidates for the designation of a State song, including that the song  
16 selected: (1) should celebrate the best in Maryland and its citizens; (2) should be unique to  
17 Maryland; (3) should be memorable; (4) should be popular; (5) should be singable; (6) should  
18 be short; (7) should be historically significant; and (8) should be inclusive of all  
19 Marylanders; and

20 WHEREAS, Sean Tully, a resident of Baltimore City, noticed that while the third  
21 verse of Mr. Randall's poem did highlight two great Marylanders, the verse is not inclusive  
22 of all Marylanders because both Carroll and Howard were male slaveholders; and

23 WHEREAS, Mr. Tully, in an effort to retain the third verse of Mr. Randall's poem in  
24 the State song while making the song inclusive of all Marylanders, wrote a poem derived  
25 from Mr. Randall's poem and entitled, "Maryland, My Maryland!"; and

26 WHEREAS, Mr. Tully's poem meets many of the State Song Advisory Group's  
27 selection criteria, is inclusive of all Marylanders, references a famous Maryland man and  
28 woman, and creates an interesting lyrical juxtaposition between Charles Carroll, a male  
29 slaveholder, and Harriet Tubman, a courageous and formerly enslaved  
30 African American woman who escaped and helped others to escape the bondages of slavery  
31 and thereby helped to ensure that the fundamental tenets of liberty and equality contained  
32 in the Declaration of Independence, to which Carroll was a signatory, could be enjoyed by  
33 African Americans; and

34 WHEREAS, The State of Maryland needs a State song that is unifying and will  
35 endure over time; now, therefore,

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

1 **Article – General Provisions**

2 7–318.

3 (a) The poem [“Maryland! My Maryland!”] **“MARYLAND, MY MARYLAND!”**,  
 4 written by **SEAN TULLY IN 2017 AND DERIVED FROM THE POEM “MARYLAND! MY**  
 5 **MARYLAND!” WRITTEN BY** James Ryder Randall in 1861, and set to the tune of “Lauriger  
 6 Horatius”, is the State song.

7 (b) The words of the State song are:

8 **[I**

9 The despot’s heel is on thy shore,  
 10 Maryland!

11 His torch is at thy temple door,  
 12 Maryland!

13 Avenge the patriotic gore  
 14 That flecked the streets of Baltimore,  
 15 And be the battle queen of yore,  
 16 Maryland! My Maryland!

17 **II**

18 Hark to an exiled son’s appeal,  
 19 Maryland!

20 My mother State! to thee I kneel,  
 21 Maryland!

22 For life and death, for woe and weal,  
 23 Thy peerless chivalry reveal,  
 24 And gird thy beauteous limbs with steel,  
 25 Maryland! My Maryland!

26 **III]**

27 Thou wilt not cower in the dust,  
 28 **MARYLAND, MY Maryland!**

29 Thy beaming sword shall never rust,  
 30 **MARYLAND, MY Maryland!**

31 Remember Carroll’s sacred trust,  
 32 **[Remember Howard’s warlike thrust,] MAY TUBMAN’S NAME REMAIN AUGUST,—**  
 33 And all thy slumberers with the just,  
 34 Maryland[! My], **MY Maryland!**

35 **[IV**

36 Come! ’tis the red dawn of the day,  
 37 Maryland!

38 Come with thy panoplied array,  
 39 Maryland!

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1 With Ringgold's spirit for the fray,  
 2 With Watson's blood at Monterey,  
 3 With fearless Lowe and dashing May,  
 4 Maryland! My Maryland!

## V

5  
 6 Come! for thy shield is bright and strong,  
 7 Maryland!  
 8 Come! for thy dalliance does thee wrong,  
 9 Maryland!  
 10 Come to thine own heroic throng,  
 11 Stalking with Liberty along,  
 12 And chaunt thy dauntless slogan song,  
 13 Maryland! My Maryland!

## VI

14  
 15 Dear Mother! burst the tyrant's chain,  
 16 Maryland!  
 17 Virginia should not call in vain,  
 18 Maryland!  
 19 She meets her sisters on the plain—  
 20 "Sic semper!" 'tis the proud refrain  
 21 That baffles minions back again,  
 22 Maryland! My Maryland!

## VII

23  
 24 I see the blush upon thy cheek,  
 25 Maryland!  
 26 For thou wast ever bravely meek,  
 27 Maryland!  
 28 But lo! there surges forth a shriek  
 29 From hill to hill, from creek to creek—  
 30 Potomac calls to Chesapeake,  
 31 Maryland! My Maryland!

## VIII

32  
 33 Thou wilt not yield the vandal toll,  
 34 Maryland!  
 35 Thou wilt not crook to his control,  
 36 Maryland!  
 37 Better the fire upon thee roll,  
 38 Better the blade, the shot, the bowl,  
 39 Than crucifixion of the soul,  
 40 Maryland! My Maryland!

## IX

41  
 42 I hear the distant thunder—hum,

1 Maryland!

2 The Old Line's bugle, fife, and drum,

3 Maryland!

4 She is not dead, nor deaf, nor dumb—

5 Huzza! she spurns the Northern scum!

6 She breathes! she burns! she'll come! she'll come!

7 Maryland! My Maryland!]

8 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect  
9 October 1, 2018.