

**R021-0809**

**A RESOLUTION CONCERNING CHANGING THE STATE SONG OF MARYLAND**

10     **WHEREAS:** The current state song of Maryland, “Maryland, My Maryland,” is  
20     archaic and unrepresentative of the state as it is made up now, and;

30     **WHEREAS:** The current state song is divisive, as it refers to Abraham Lincoln as  
40     the “tyrant” and the “despot,” and;

50     **WHEREAS:** “Maryland, My Maryland” refers to the phrase *sic semper* as the  
60     “proud refrain,” the disgraceful phrase cried by John Wilkes Booth immediately  
70     following his shooting of President Lincoln, and;

80     **WHEREAS:** Erica Wheeler, singer/songwriter of “Maryland County Road,” is  
90     from our great state and her song celebrates her love for the state of Maryland.

100    **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:** That the Maryland Student Legislature  
110    urges the Maryland General Assembly to change the state song of Maryland from  
120    “Maryland, My Maryland” to “Maryland County Road.”

130    **MANDATES:**

140    Martin O’Malley, Governor

150    Thomas V. “Mike” Miller, Jr., President of the Senate

160    Michael E. Busch, Speaker of the House of Delegates

**SPONSORS:**

Claire Turpel, McDaniel College

Sarah Martin, McDaniel College

“Maryland, My Maryland”

The despot's heel is on thy shore,  
Maryland!\*

His torch is at thy temple door,  
Maryland!

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

Hark to an exiled son's appeal,  
Maryland!

My mother State! to thee I kneel,  
Maryland!

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

Thou wilt not cower in the dust,  
Maryland!

Thy beaming sword shall never rust,  
Maryland!

Remember Carroll's sacred trust,  
Remember Howard's warlike thrust,-  
And all thy slumberers with the just,  
Maryland! My Maryland!

Come! 'tis the red dawn of the day,  
Maryland!

Come with thy panoplied array,  
Maryland!

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

Come! for thy shield is bright and strong,  
Maryland!

Come! for thy dalliance does thee wrong,  
Maryland!

Come to thine own anointed throng,  
Stalking with Liberty along,  
And chaunt thy dauntless slogan song,  
Maryland! My Maryland!

Dear Mother! burst the tyrant's chain,  
Maryland!  
Virginia should not call in vain,  
Maryland!  
She meets her sisters on the plain-  
"Sic semper!" 'tis the proud refrain  
That baffles minions back amain,  
Arise in majesty again,  
Maryland! My Maryland!

I see the blush upon thy cheek,  
Maryland!  
For thou wast ever bravely meek,  
Maryland!  
But lo! there surges forth a shriek,  
From hill to hill, from creek to creek-  
Potomac calls to Chesapeake,  
Maryland! My Maryland!

Thou wilt not yield the Vandal toll,  
Maryland!  
Thou wilt not crook to his control,  
Maryland!  
Better the fire upon thee roll, Better the blade, the shot, the bowl,  
Than crucifixion of the soul,  
Maryland! My Maryland!

I hear the distant thunder-hum,  
Maryland!  
The Old Line's bugle, fife, and drum,  
Maryland!  
She is not dead, nor deaf, nor dumb-  
Huzza! she spurns the Northern scum!  
She breathes! she burns! she'll come! she'll come!  
Maryland! My Maryland!

**History:**

The poem was a result of events at the beginning of the American Civil War. During the secession crisis, President Abraham Lincoln (referred to in the poem as "the despot" and "the tyrant") ordered federal troops to be brought to Washington, D.C. to protect the capital. Many of these troops were brought through Baltimore City, a major transportation hub. There was a lot of Confederate sympathy in Maryland at the time and riots ensued as the troops came through Baltimore in April 1861. Several people were

killed in the Baltimore riots, including a friend of James Ryder Randall. Randall, a native Marylander, was teaching at Poydras College in Pointe Coupee Parish, Louisiana, at the time and, moved by the news of his friend's death, wrote the nine-stanza poem, "Maryland, My Maryland". The poem was a plea to his home state of Maryland to secede from the Union and join the Confederacy. The poem contains many references to the Mexican-American War and Maryland figures in that war (many of whom have fallen into obscurity). It was first published in the New Orleans *Sunday Delta* on 26 April 1861. The poem was quickly turned into a song by putting it to the tune "Lauriger Horatius" and became instantly popular in Maryland and throughout the South. It was sometimes called "the Marseillaise of the South." Confederate States Army bands played the song after they crossed into Maryland territory during the Maryland Campaign in 1862.<sup>[4]</sup>