

HOUSE BILL 122

P1

0lr1381

By: **Delegate Chang**

Introduced and read first time: January 15, 2020

Assigned to: Health and Government Operations

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **General Provisions – Commemorative Days – Hangul Day**

3 FOR the purpose of requiring the Governor annually to proclaim a certain day as Hangul
4 Day; and generally relating to Hangul Day.

5 BY renumbering

6 Article – General Provisions

7 Section 7–415 through 7–417, respectively

8 to be Section 7–416 through 7–418, respectively

9 Annotated Code of Maryland

10 (2019 Replacement Volume)

11 BY adding to

12 Article – General Provisions

13 Section 7–415

14 Annotated Code of Maryland

15 (2019 Replacement Volume)

16 Preamble

17 WHEREAS, Hangul, the Korean alphabet, is the writing system designed to write
18 the Korean language and has garnered worldwide attention for its unique attributes; and

19 WHEREAS, Hangul is the only alphabet whose origin can be officially traced by
20 historians – created by Sejong the Great, the fourth king of the Joseon Dynasty, in 1443
21 and officially promulgated as the Korean writing system in the ninth lunar month of 1446
22 as a way of improving the lives of the common people and to promote literacy; and

23 WHEREAS, There is no other language with a writing system that has its creation
24 rooted in a philosophy of benevolence and humanity toward the common people, aligning
25 with the founding principles of the modern form of democracy; and

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 WHEREAS, Hangul is distinct from all other writing systems because it was created
2 based on an anatomic analysis of human speech organs and a philosophical view of the
3 universe, with 17 consonants based on graphic representations of the speech organs when
4 pronouncing the particular sounds, and systematic design principles for both consonants
5 and vowels that cannot be found in any other alphabets in the world; and

6 WHEREAS, Hangul is the only written language system whose tenets were officially
7 documented by its creator in the “Hunminjeongeum” manuscript in 1446, which enabled
8 Korean language scholars to calculate October 9, 1446, as the birthdate of Hangul; and

9 WHEREAS, UNESCO registered Hunminjeongeum, with included commentaries
10 known as the “Hunminjeongeum Haerye”, in the Memory of the World Register in 1997, in
11 recognition of the significance of the fact that it contains a comprehensive record of the
12 whole procedure from designing Hangul to promulgating it; and

13 WHEREAS, According to the U.S. Census Bureau, there are more than 60,000
14 Korean Americans living in the State of Maryland who have become an important part of
15 Maryland society by making significant contributions in the fields of finance, technology,
16 law, medicine, education, sports, media, the arts, the military, and government, and by
17 having established more than 100 nonprofit organizations, including 147 churches and 38
18 Korean schools, serving Maryland; and

19 WHEREAS, Due to the rising popularity of Korean culture through K-pop,
20 K-dramas, and Korean food, the Korean language continues to become a cultural force
21 throughout the world; and

22 WHEREAS, Korean is one of the five strategic languages, along with Arabic,
23 Chinese, Japanese, and Russian, designated by the National Security Language Initiative,
24 that Americans are encouraged to learn, and Korean is one of nine foreign languages the
25 College Board has included in the SAT Subject Tests; and

26 WHEREAS, The Modern Language Association reports that, while most foreign
27 language programs in colleges have decreased in recent years, Korean programs have
28 increased remarkably; and

29 WHEREAS, Among the 128 universities in the U.S. teaching the Korean language,
30 two major Maryland universities, the University of Maryland, College Park Campus and
31 the University of Maryland, Baltimore County, offer Korean language programs in their
32 higher education curricula; and

33 WHEREAS, Over 90,000 Americans, including Americans with Korean heritage,
34 learn Hangul at 980 Korean schools throughout the United States; and

35 WHEREAS, Hangul Day in Maryland would not only acknowledge Hangul as a
36 scientific and philosophical writing system but also embrace Maryland’s pride in its ethnic
37 and cultural diversity and inclusiveness; now, therefore,

1 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
2 That Section(s) 7–415 through 7–417, respectively, of Article – General Provisions of the
3 Annotated Code of Maryland be renumbered to be Section(s) 7–416 through 7–418,
4 respectively.

5 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That the Laws of Maryland read
6 as follows:

7 **Article – General Provisions**

8 **7–415.**

9 **THE GOVERNOR ANNUALLY SHALL PROCLAIM OCTOBER 9 AS HANGUL DAY.**

10 SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
11 October 1, 2020.