

1998 SESSION

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SB48

983026717

SENATE BILL NO. 48

Offered January 14, 1998

A *BILL to amend and reenact § 7.1-37 of the Code of Virginia, relating to the official song of the Commonwealth.*

Patron—Miller, Y.B.

Referred to the Committee on General Laws

Whereas, the Commonwealth has no official song because "Carry Me Back to Old Virginia," declared official song of the Commonwealth in 1940, has been declared the official song emeritus of the Commonwealth; and

Whereas, the official song should reference the rich history and tradition of the Commonwealth and invoke images of the natural and scenic beauty its citizens celebrate; and

Whereas, the Commonwealth requires an official song that can be sung on all occasions with pride and affection; and

Whereas the song "Our Commonwealth," written and composed by Thomas R. McNamara and Pat Curtis and arranged by Lou Sawyer, meets these expectations; and

Whereas, the words of this song are as follows:

Our Commonwealth

First Verse:

Oh blessed land whose gracious hand, from trials of wind and sea,

Embraced the first small weary band of settlers seeking Thee;

Who nourished from its infant start our nation to its might;

Who shaped its soul and filled its heart and set its course aright!

Refrain:

Stand tall and straight our Mother State like a proud Virginia pine!

In strength and health, our Commonwealth on whom God's blessings shine!

Second Verse

Whose gifts delight all appetite with fruit of field and tree;

Whose dancing streams reflect our dreams and set our spirits free;

Whose Allegheny highlands green bespeak our liberty;

From whose great capes the bay escapes into the open sea!

Refrain:

Whose working force and industry give forth unending song,

From ships and mines, from roads and rails in chorus true and strong;

Where people sharing dignity respect each other's dream;

Where church and state still separate and freedom reigns supreme!

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That § 7.1-37 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:

§ 7.1-37. Official song.

A. The song "Carry Me Back to Old Virginia," by James A. Bland, as set out in the House Joint Resolution 10, adopted by the General Assembly of Virginia at the Session of 1940, is declared to be the official song emeritus of the Commonwealth.

B. The song "Our Commonwealth," written and composed by Thomas R. McNamara and Pat Curtis and arranged by Lou Sawyer, is declared the official song of the Commonwealth.