VIRGINIA ACTS OF ASSEMBLY -- 2015 SESSION

CHAPTER 586

An Act to amend and reenact § 1-510 of the Code of Virginia, relating to official emblems and designations; state song.

[H 1472]

Approved March 26, 2015

Whereas, the Commonwealth has no official song because "Carry Me Back to Old Virginny," declared the official song of the Commonwealth in 1940, was declared the official song emeritus of the Commonwealth in 1997; and

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

Whereas, the extensive history and diversity of the Commonwealth require the designation of two official songs that can be sung with pride and affection; and

Whereas, "Our Great Virginia," lyrics by Mike Greenly and arranged by Jim Papoulis, meets the melodic and lyrical requirements for a state song, the words of which are as follows:

"You'll always be our great Virginia.
You're the birthplace of the nation:
Where history was changed forever.
Today, your glory stays, as we build tomorrow.

I fill with pride at all you give us—
Rolling hills, majestic mountains,
From the Shenandoah to the Atlantic,
Rivers wide and forests tall, all in one Virginia.

For each of us here in Virginia,
From farm to city dweller,
All of us, we stand together.
We're yours, we all are yours—
Across our great Virginia.
You'll always be our great Virginia."; and

Whereas, "Sweet Virginia Breeze," by Robbin Thompson and Steve Bassett, meets the melodic and lyrical requirements for a state song, the words of which are as follows:

Woke up this morning, the breeze blowin' 'cross my face,
And I just had to look up above and thank somebody for this place,
Because He must've been thinkin' 'bout me
When He planted that very first dogwood tree,
It's where I want to be,
Livin' in the Sweet Virginia Breeze.

Take me out to the country, it feels mighty good out there,
When I get back to the city of the monuments,
It doesn't matter where I hang my hat, it's home to me,
The Blue Ridge Mountains tend to set me free,
It's where I want to be,
Livin' in the Sweet Virginia Breeze.

Wakes me up in the mornin',
Rocks me to sleep at night,
I've got a red bird singin' on my window sill,
I know everything will be all right,
Livin' in the Sweet Virginia Breeze.

Just sittin' on my back porch,
I'm just watchin' the sun come up,
Sweet sweet Virginia Breeze blowin' ripples 'cross my coffee cup,
Because He must've been thinkin' 'bout me when He planted that very first dogwood tree,
'Cause when that breeze comes blowin' through the trees,

You know everything will be all right,
Livin' in a Sweet Virginia Breeze,
Sweet Virginia Breeze"; and

Whereas, "Our Great Virginia" is worthy of designation as the official traditional song of the Commonwealth and "Sweet Virginia Breeze" is worthy of designation as the official popular song of the Commonwealth; now, therefore,

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That § 1-510 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:

§ 1-510. Official emblems and designations.

The following are hereby designated official emblems and designations of the Commonwealth:

Artisan Center - "Virginia Artisans Center," located in the City of Waynesboro.

Bat - Virginia Big-eared bat (Corynorhinos townsendii virginianus).

Beverage - Milk.

Blue Ridge Folklore State Center - Blue Ridge Institute located in the village of Ferrum.

Boat - "Chesapeake Bay Deadrise."

Cabin Capital of Virginia - Page County.

Coal Miners' Memorial - The Richlands Coal Miners' Memorial located in Tazewell County.

Covered Bridge Capital of the Commonwealth - Patrick County.

Covered Bridge Festival - Virginia Covered Bridge Festival held in Patrick County.

Dog - American Foxhound.

Emergency medical services museum - "To The Rescue," located in the City of Roanoke.

Fish (Freshwater) - Brook Trout.

Fish (Saltwater) - Striped Bass.

Fleet - Replicas of the three ships, Susan Constant, Godspeed, and Discovery, which comprised the Commonwealth's founding fleet that brought the first permanent English settlers to Jamestown in 1607, and which are exhibited at the Jamestown Settlement in Williamsburg.

Flower - American Dogwood (Cornus florida).

Folk dance - Square dancing, the American folk dance that traces its ancestry to the English Country Dance and the French Ballroom Dance, and is called, cued, or prompted to the dancers, and includes squares, rounds, clogging, contra, line, the Virginia Reel, and heritage dances.

Fossil - Chesapecten jeffersonius.

Gold mining interpretive center - Monroe Park, located in the County of Fauquier.

Insect - Tiger Swallowtail Butterfly (Papilio glaucus Linne).

Maple Festival - The Highland County Maple Festival.

Motor sports museum - "Wood Brothers Racing Museum and Virginia Motor Sports Hall of Fame," located in Patrick County.

Outdoor drama - "The Trail of the Lonesome Pine Outdoor Drama," adapted for the stage by Clara Lou Kelly and performed in the Town of Big Stone Gap.

Outdoor drama, historical - "The Long Way Home" based on the life of Mary Draper Ingles, adapted for the stage by Earl Hobson Smith, and performed in the City of Radford.

Shakespeare festival - The Virginia Shakespeare Festival held in the City of Williamsburg.

Shell - Oyster shell (Crassostrea virginica).

Song emeritus - "Carry Me Back to Old ~~Virginia~~ *Virginny*," 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.

Song (Popular) - "Sweet Virginia Breeze," by Robbin Thompson and Steve Bassett.

Song (Traditional) - "Our Great Virginia," lyrics by Mike Greenly and arranged by Jim Papoulis with music from the original American folksong "Oh Shenandoah."

Sports hall of fame - "Virginia Sports Hall of Fame," located in the City of Portsmouth.

War memorial museum - "Virginia War Museum," (formerly known as the War Memorial Museum of Virginia), located in the City of Newport News.