

Sheweth That his Majesty King Charles the first by Letters Patent under the Great Seale of England in the eighth year of his Reign Granted to Cecilius Calvert Baron of Baltimore your Petitioners Ancestor and his heirs A large Tract of Land in America named Maryland and thereby appointed the said Baron of Baltimore and his heirs absolute Lords and Proprietarys of the said County which was thereby Erected into a province To Hold in soccage and not in Capite or by knights service and his said Majesty Granted to the said Baron of Baltimore and heirs full power and Authority to make and Issue any laws whatsoever for the good and welfare of the said province either in respect to the publick conveniency or for the private benefit of Individuals at his and their own Discretion but with the advice and approbation of the Freeholders of the said province or the Major part of them or their Representatives (whom the said Proprietarys were thereby Authorised to summon for the purpose of making such Laws as often as occasion should require) and such Laws to Publish under the Seal of the said proprietary and his heirs with full power to Enforce the Execution thereof by Capital and other Punishment Imprisonment and Fine and which Laws by the Express Terms of the said Grant were and are to be Subject to no other Limitation or restriction whatever Than that the same be Consonant to Reason and neither Repugnant or contrary but as near as may be agreeable to the Laws Statutes Custome and Rights of England And power was likewise given to the said Lord Baltimore and his heirs from time to time to make proper and wholesome ordinances for the better Government of the said province with several other extensive Rights powers and privileges And the said Charter or grant is directed to be construed in the most favourable and Beneficial manner for the Grantee and his heirs

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That from 1632 to this present year 1748/9 the powers of Legislature have been Exercised within this province in the full Extent of the Royal Grant by the Lords Proprietarys in their own persons or by their Governors by them appointed by the advice and Concurrence of the ffreeholders in their General Assemblys who have from time to time of their own sole Authority made and Enacted such wholesome Laws for the better ordering of the said province as the Exigencys of Government required without the least repugnancy in such Laws either to Reason or the Laws of their Mother Country, the only Test and Standard prescribed by their Charter, and as your Petitioners Ancestors from their steady and uniform adherence to the strict Terms of their Grant were never Interrupted in the Exercise and Enjoyment of their Rights and priviledges so your Pctitioner had no Doubt but that from a steady pursuing the like uniformity of behaviour He should have handed down to his posterity the great Priviledges conferred upon his Ancestors by the Crown, as a reward for their Services, pure and Inviolate as they