

[5-212.]

Notwithstanding the provisions of Part III of Title 4, Subtitle 4 of the State Finance and Procurement Article, and subject to the availability of funds and in accordance with other provisions of this subtitle regarding the Historic St. Mary's City Commission, the Commission, with the concurrence of the Secretary, may enter into agreements with preservation land trusts, foundations, and other entities for the purpose of acquiring title to or an interest in property in Historic St. Mary's City that is owned by such an entity or on which the entity holds an option or a contract to purchase.]

Article - Education

SUBTITLE 5. HISTORIC ST. MARY'S CITY COMMISSION.

PART I. ESTABLISHMENT OF HISTORIC ST. MARY'S CITY COMMISSION.

24-501.

THERE IS A HISTORIC ST. MARY'S CITY COMMISSION.

24-502.

(A) THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY MAKES THE FOLLOWING DECLARATIONS AND FINDINGS:

(1) ST. MARY'S CITY IS THE BIRTHPLACE AND FIRST CAPITAL OF MARYLAND AND OCCUPIES A UNIQUE PLACE IN AMERICAN HISTORY WHICH DESERVES HONOR AND RESPECT. ST. MARY'S CITY IS THE POINT OF ORIGIN OF MANY OF THE SEMINAL AND VITAL SOCIAL, POLITICAL, RELIGIOUS AND HUMANE PRECEPTS OF OUR NATION AS LATER CAME TO BE REFLECTED IN THE UNITED STATES CONSTITUTION AND BILL OF RIGHTS. ST. MARY'S CITY SHOULD BE PROTECTED AND DEVELOPED AS A MEMORIAL TO MARYLAND'S HISTORICAL BEGINNINGS AND HER EXTRAORDINARY CONTRIBUTION TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THIS NATION.

~~(2) (H) MANY MARYLAND AND NATIONAL "FIRSTS" OCCURRED AT ST. MARY'S CITY. ST. MARY'S CITY WAS THE PLACE WHERE:~~

~~1: THE SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE WAS FIRST PRACTICED IN THE UNITED STATES STARTING IN 1634;~~

~~2: MATHIAS DE SOUSA WAS THE FIRST MAN OF AFRICAN DESCENT TO VOTE IN A LEGISLATURE IN 1645;~~

~~3: THE FIRST WOMEN'S REQUEST FOR THE RIGHT TO VOTE WAS VOICED BY MARGARET BRENT IN 1647, AND~~

~~4: THE FIRST RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE ACT WAS ADOPTED IN 1649.~~

~~(H) IN ADDITION, HISTORIC ST. MARY'S CITY IS ONE OF THE OLDEST AND BEST PRESERVED EARLY COLONIAL TOWN SITES REMAINING IN AMERICA. THE FIRST ROMAN CATHOLIC CHAPEL IN THE ENGLISH COLONIES WAS~~