Maryland colonial areas had been under British control in the early 17th Century. King Charles the First wrote a charter that gave control of this New World territory called Maryland, to the second Lord Baltimore, Sir Cecil Calvert, in 1632, and called it a province, or colony. (*Maryland Charter*, Article VI) This new Maryland charter was the first New World colony charter to give the ability to pass its own laws, to let the people agree to the taxes it would pay, and to have religious freedom.

The king made Cecil Calvert, and any future descendants, “true and absolute Lords and Proprietaries “ (*Maryland Charter*, Article V) of Maryland. Cecil Calvert named his brother, Leonard Calvert, governor of the territory in 1633, so Leonard traveled to the Chesapeake Bay area with a couple hundred others to take his new position in 1634.

By 1639, Maryland established a house of assembly, made up of representatives, to make laws.

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