



LEGISLATIVE BLACK CAUCUS OF MARYLAND, INC.

The Maryland House of Delegates, 6 Bladen Street, Room 300, Annapolis, Maryland 21401
410-841-3557 • 301-858-3557 • 800-492-7122 Ext. 3557 • Fax 410-841-3498 • 301-858-3498 • Black.Caucus@house.state.md.us

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February 25, 2020

Delegate Shane Pendergrass
Chair, HGO

Delegate Joseline Pena-Melnyk
Vice Chair, HGO

Dear Chair Pendergrass and Members of the Committee:

The Legislative Black Caucus of Maryland has voted to offer **favorable** support for HB 1512 –Historic African American Cemeteries Preservation Fund. The purpose of this legislation is to provide funds to restore and maintain historic African American cemeteries based on the number of graves people who lived between 1800 and 1900.

Nationwide, there is an interest to restore historic African American cemeteries as an important source of history as well as sacred ground. Between the 2004 Montgomery County Cemetery Inventory and 2018 Montgomery County Cemetery report, 18 African American cemeteries were lost and 8 cemeteries were found. In 2018 a historic African-American cemetery was found beneath a Baltimore shopping center.

We feel this legislation is important because many of the burial sites are of formerly enslaved blacks and their families. They represent an important, often forgotten part of our history. For this reason, the Legislative Black Caucus of Maryland supports HB 1512.

Respectfully,

Darryl Barnes
Chair, Legislative Black Caucus
of Maryland

Edith Patterson
1st Vice Chair, Legislative Black
Caucus of Maryland