

**Subject: Support for Senate Bill 354 - Maryland Inventory of Cemeteries and Burial Sites Workgroup**

Dear Members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee,

I am writing to express my strong support for Senate Bill 354, which seeks to establish the Maryland Inventory of Cemeteries and Burial Sites Workgroup. This bill is a crucial step towards preserving and documenting the rich historical and cultural heritage of Maryland's cemeteries and burial sites.

Cemeteries and burial sites are invaluable resources that provide insights into our past, offering a tangible connection to the lives and stories of those who came before us. However, many of these sites are at risk of being lost or forgotten due to neglect, development, or lack of proper documentation. Senate Bill 354 addresses this issue by creating a dedicated workgroup to study and recommend best practices for the establishment and maintenance of a comprehensive state cemetery inventory system.

The proposed workgroup will bring together experts from various fields, including the Maryland Historical Trust, the Maryland Office of Cemetery Oversight, the Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture, and other relevant organizations. This collaborative approach ensures that the workgroup will have the necessary expertise and resources to develop a robust and effective inventory system.

By identifying and reviewing current cemetery documentation practices, the workgroup will be able to recommend standardized definitions and procedures that will enhance the accuracy and consistency of cemetery records across the state. This will not only help preserve our historical and cultural heritage but also provide valuable information for genealogical research, land use planning, and community development.

Furthermore, the establishment of a state cemetery inventory system will promote greater public awareness and appreciation of these important sites. It will encourage local communities to take an active role in preserving their heritage and foster a sense of pride and connection to their history.

In conclusion, I urge you to support Senate Bill 354 and the establishment of the Maryland Inventory of Cemeteries and Burial Sites Workgroup. This bill represents a significant investment in the preservation of our state's historical and cultural legacy, and I believe it will have a lasting positive impact on our communities.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Greg Burton