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Committee

Subcommittees

Land Use and Ethics

Chair, Motor Vehicle and
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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Testimony in Support of HB 2
Annotated Code - Terminology -
Clergy and Churches, Faith Institutions, and Places of Worship
Testimony by Delegate Vaughn Stewart
March 3rd, 2025 • Rules and Executive Nominations Committee

What the Bill Does

The Maryland General Assembly has made legislation over the years to create many special regulations for institutions of faith. These regulations are important and provide tax exemptions, zoning requirements, licensure requirements, and more. However, the Maryland General Assembly has not always used language that is inclusive of all faiths when creating these laws. To solve this issue, HB 2 changes the Maryland Code so that most mentions of 'churches' are altered to 'faith institutions' to make the code more inclusive of other faith practices.

This legislation also updates nine instances from the term "clergyman" to "member of the clergy" to include all religious leaders-- regardless of gender.

Why the Committee Should Vote Favorably

Maryland is a place that is welcome to synagogues, mosques, temples, and places of worship for all faiths and this bill is essential to ensuring equal protection under the law for all faith practices in Maryland.

I urge a favorable report.