

Chapter 412

(Senate Bill 354)

AN ACT concerning

Maryland Inventory of Cemeteries and Burial Sites Workgroup – Establishment

FOR the purpose of establishing the Maryland Inventory of Cemeteries and Burial Sites Workgroup for the purpose of studying issues related to the establishment and maintenance of a State cemetery inventory system; and generally relating to the Maryland Inventory of Cemeteries and Burial Sites Workgroup.

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
That:

- (a) There is a Maryland Inventory of Cemeteries and Burial Sites Workgroup.
- (b) The Workgroup consists of the following members:
 - (1) the Director of the Maryland Historical Trust, or the Director's designee;
 - (2) the Executive Director of the Maryland Office of Cemetery Oversight, or the Executive Director's designee;
 - (3) the Chair of the Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture, or the Chair's designee;
 - (4) the President of the Coalition to Protect Maryland Burial Sites, Incorporated, or the President's designee;
 - (5) the Chief of the Office of Cultural Resources in the Maryland Department of Transportation, or the Chief's designee;
 - (6) the President of Preservation Maryland, or the President's designee;
 - (7) the Maryland State Archivist, or the Maryland State Archivist's designee; and
 - (8) the following members, appointed by the Secretary of Labor:
 - (i) a representative of a local government with an existing cemetery inventory program;
 - (ii) up to three representatives from local genealogical and historical organizations that carry out cemetery research and documentation;

- (iii) a representative of a local descendant community;
- (iv) a representative of a local cemetery; and
- (v) a representative of a religious cemetery.

(c) The chair of the Workgroup shall be selected by the Workgroup from among its members.

(d) The Maryland Historical Trust ~~and the Office of Cemetery Oversight~~ shall provide staff for the Workgroup.

(e) A member of the Workgroup:

- (1) may not receive compensation as a member of the Workgroup; but
- (2) is entitled to reimbursement for expenses under the Standard State Travel Regulations, as provided in the State budget.

(f) The Workgroup shall:

- (1) identify and review the various definitions of the terms “cemetery”, “burial group”, “burial site”, and any related terms in the Maryland Annotated Code and recommend a single definition for each term;
- (2) identify and evaluate current cemetery documentation practices used by county governments and municipal cultural resource management and historic preservation programs, nonprofit preservation organizations, and private entities;
- (3) identify and evaluate cemetery inventory systems implemented in other states to determine best practices for and challenges to designing, implementing, and maintaining a cemetery inventory system in the State;
- (4) evaluate existing cemetery inventories maintained by county governments, historic preservation programs, and genealogical organizations to determine the best methods for integrating existing information into a State cemetery inventory system;
- (5) identify and recommend a set of categories for data collection and maintenance and system functions, including a public search function, for a State cemetery inventory system;
- (6) recommend the appropriate entity to collect data for and maintain a State cemetery inventory system;

(7) determine the cost of designing, implementing, and maintaining a State cemetery inventory system and recommend a source of funding to implement a State cemetery inventory system beginning in fiscal year 2027; and

(8) evaluate the feasibility and cost of establishing a grant program to provide financial assistance to governmental entities and nonprofit genealogical and historical organizations to expedite identification of cemeteries and recommend the funding amount and source for a grant program beginning in fiscal year 2027.

(g) On or before December 1, 2025, the Workgroup shall report its findings and recommendations to the Governor and, in accordance with § 2-1257 of the State Government Article, the General Assembly.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July 1, 2025. It shall remain effective for a period of 1 year and, at the end of June 30, 2026, this Act, with no further action required by the General Assembly, shall be abrogated and of no further force and effect.

Approved by the Governor, May 6, 2025.