

HOUSE BILL 509

C2

5lr2035
CF SB 354

By: Delegates Simmons, Harris, A. Johnson, Taylor, ~~and Tomlinson~~ Tomlinson, Alston, Bagnall, Bhandari, Chisholm, Cullison, Guzzone, Hill, Hutchinson, S. Johnson, Kaiser, Kerr, Kipke, Lopez, Martinez, M. Morgan, Pena-Melnyk, Reilly, Rosenberg, Ross, Szeliga, Taveras, White Holland, Woods, and Woorman

Introduced and read first time: January 22, 2025

Assigned to: Health and Government Operations

Committee Report: Favorable with amendments

House action: Adopted

Read second time: March 6, 2025

CHAPTER _____

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Maryland Inventory of Cemeteries and Burial Sites Workgroup – Establishment**

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

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

9 (a) There is a Maryland Inventory of Cemeteries and Burial Sites Workgroup.

10 (b) The Workgroup consists of the following members:

11 (1) the Director of the Maryland Historical Trust, or the Director's
12 designee;

13 (2) the Executive Director of the Maryland Office of Cemetery Oversight,
14 or the Executive Director's designee;

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.

Underlining indicates amendments to bill.

~~Strike out~~ indicates matter stricken from the bill by amendment or deleted from the law by amendment.



1 (3) the Chair of the Maryland Commission on African American History
2 and Culture, or the Chair's designee;

3 (4) the President of the Coalition to Protect Maryland Burial Sites,
4 Incorporated, or the President's designee;

5 (5) the Chief of the Office of Cultural Resources in the Maryland
6 Department of Transportation, or the Chief's designee;

7 (6) the President of Preservation Maryland, or the President's designee;

8 (7) the Maryland State Archivist, or the Maryland State Archivist's
9 designee; and

10 (8) the following members, appointed by the Secretary of Labor:

11 (i) a representative of a local government with an existing cemetery
12 inventory program;

13 (ii) up to three representatives from local genealogical and historical
14 organizations that carry out cemetery research and documentation;

15 (iii) a representative of a local descendant community;

16 (iv) a representative of a local cemetery; and

17 (v) a representative of a religious cemetery.

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

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

22 (e) A member of the Workgroup:

23 (1) may not receive compensation as a member of the Workgroup; but

24 (2) is entitled to reimbursement for expenses under the Standard State
25 Travel Regulations, as provided in the State budget.

26 (f) The Workgroup shall:

27 (1) identify and review the various definitions of the terms "cemetery",
28 "burial group", "burial site", and any related terms in the Maryland Annotated Code and
29 recommend a single definition for each term;

1 (2) identify and evaluate current cemetery documentation practices used
2 by county governments and municipal cultural resource management and historic
3 preservation programs, nonprofit preservation organizations, and private entities;

4 (3) identify and evaluate cemetery inventory systems implemented in
5 other states to determine best practices for and challenges to designing, implementing, and
6 maintaining a cemetery inventory system in the State;

7 (4) evaluate existing cemetery inventories maintained by county
8 governments, historic preservation programs, and genealogical organizations to determine
9 the best methods for integrating existing information into a State cemetery inventory
10 system;

11 (5) identify and recommend a set of categories for data collection and
12 maintenance and system functions, including a public search function, for a State cemetery
13 inventory system;

14 (6) recommend the appropriate entity to collect data for and maintain a
15 State cemetery inventory system;

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

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

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

26 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July
27 1, 2025. It shall remain effective for a period of 1 year and, at the end of June 30, 2026, this
28 Act, with no further action required by the General Assembly, shall be abrogated and of no
29 further force and effect.