

SENATE BILL 354

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By: **Senator Salling**

Introduced and read first time: January 16, 2025

Assigned to: Education, Energy, and the Environment

A BILL ENTITLED

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;

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

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

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

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

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 (7) the Maryland State Archivist, or the Maryland State Archivist's
2 designee; and

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

4 (i) a representative of a local government with an existing cemetery
5 inventory program;

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

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

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

10 (v) a representative of a religious cemetery.

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

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

15 (e) A member of the Workgroup:

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

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

19 (f) The Workgroup shall:

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

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

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

29 (4) evaluate existing cemetery inventories maintained by county
30 governments, historic preservation programs, and genealogical organizations to determine

1 the best methods for integrating existing information into a State cemetery inventory
2 system;

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

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

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

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

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

18 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July
19 1, 2025. It shall remain effective for a period of 1 year and, at the end of June 30, 2026, this
20 Act, with no further action required by the General Assembly, shall be abrogated and of no
21 further force and effect.