

SENATE BILL 354

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5lr2034
CF HB 509

By: ~~Senator Salling~~ **Senators Salling, Brooks, Kagan, and M. Washington**

Introduced and read first time: January 16, 2025

Assigned to: Education, Energy, and the Environment

Committee Report: Favorable with amendments

Senate action: Adopted

Read second time: February 22, 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;

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;

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

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

4 (7) the Maryland State Archivist, or the Maryland State Archivist's
5 designee; and

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

7 (i) a representative of a local government with an existing cemetery
8 inventory program;

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

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

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

13 (v) a representative of a religious cemetery.

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

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

18 (e) A member of the Workgroup:

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

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

22 (f) The Workgroup shall:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

23 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July
24 1, 2025. It shall remain effective for a period of 1 year and, at the end of June 30, 2026, this
25 Act, with no further action required by the General Assembly, shall be abrogated and of no
26 further force and effect.

Approved:

Governor.

President of the Senate.

Speaker of the House of Delegates.