

SENATE BILL 168

N1

6lr1629

(PRE-FILED)

By: Senator Watson

Requested: October 31, 2025

Introduced and read first time: January 14, 2026

Assigned to: Budget and Taxation

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **State Department of Assessments and Taxation – Blockchain-Based Real**
3 **Property Title Pilot Program – Establishment**

4 FOR the purpose of establishing the Blockchain-Based Real Property Title Pilot Program
5 in the State Department of Assessments and Taxation to explore the use of
6 blockchain technology for securely recording and verifying real property ownership
7 and to assess its potential for use by law enforcement and courts in resolving certain
8 real property disputes; and generally relating to the Blockchain-Based Real
9 Property Title Pilot Program.

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

12 (a) (1) In this section the following words have the meanings indicated.

13 (2) “Blockchain” means a distributed ledger technology that provides a
14 secure, immutable, and transparent method of recording and storing data.

15 (3) “Digital title” means a cryptographically secured token or smart
16 contract that represents ownership of real property in the State.

17 (4) “Pilot jurisdictions” means not more than three counties in the State
18 selected by the State Department of Assessments and Taxation to implement the Pilot
19 Program.

20 (5) “Pilot Program” means the Blockchain-Based Real Property Title Pilot
21 Program.

22 (6) “Squatting” means the unauthorized occupation of real property by an
23 individual who does not have legal title, a lease, or the right of possession.

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



3 (2) The purpose of the Pilot Program is to:

4 (i) explore the use of blockchain technology for securely recording
5 and verifying real property ownership; and

6 (ii) assess the potential for the use of blockchain technology to assist
7 law enforcement and courts in resolving real property disputes involving squatting.

10 (2) The Pilot Program shall begin on or before January 1, 2027.

11 (d) The State Department of Assessments and Taxation shall coordinate with the
12 Maryland Judiciary, the Maryland State Police, local law enforcement agencies, and the
13 Office of the Attorney General to:

14 (1) create a blockchain registry to record and verify digital titles;

15 (2) authorize property owners in pilot jurisdictions to opt in to having their
16 property titles mirrored on the blockchain as digital titles;

17 (3) provide a secure application programming interface for law
18 enforcement and courts to validate the status of digital titles in real time;

19 (4) test smart contract capabilities for title transfers and escrow functions;
20 and

21 (5) educate consumers, law enforcement, and courts on how to use the
22 blockchain registry.

23 (e) (1) Subject to paragraphs (2) and (3) of this subsection, the State
24 Department of Assessments and Taxation may contract with third-party technology
25 vendors to create the blockchain registry required under subsection (d) of this section.

30 (3) A technology vendor under this subsection shall:

31 (i) comply with cybersecurity standards; and

(ii) ensure data privacy and interoperability with existing State systems.

3 (f) On or before December 31, 2028, the State Department of Assessments and
4 Taxation, in coordination with the Maryland Judiciary, the Maryland State Police, local
5 law enforcement agencies, and the Office of the Attorney General, shall report the results
6 of the Pilot Program and recommendations for statewide adoption to the Governor and, in
7 accordance with § 2-1257 of the State Government Article, the General Assembly.

8 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
9 October 1, 2026. It shall remain effective for a period of 2 years and 9 months and, at the
10 end of June 30, 2029, this Act, with no further action required by the General Assembly,
11 shall be abrogated and of no further force and effect.