SENATE BILL 168

N1
6lr1629

(PRE–FILED)
CF HB 810

By: **Senator Watson**
Requested: October 31, 2025
Introduced and read first time: January 14, 2026
Assigned to: Budget and Taxation

Committee Report: Favorable with amendments
Senate action: Adopted
Read second time: February 20, 2026

CHAPTER _____

1 AN ACT concerning

2 ~~State Department of Assessments and Taxation –~~ Study to Evaluate
3 Blockchain–Based Real Property Title ~~Pilot Program – Establishment~~
4 Recordation and Verification

5 FOR the purpose of ~~establishing the Blockchain–Based Real Property Title Pilot Program~~
6 ~~in~~ requiring the State Department of Assessments and Taxation, in coordination
7 with certain entities, to ~~explore~~ evaluate the use of blockchain technology for
8 securely recording and verifying real property ownership and to assess its potential
9 for use by law enforcement and courts in resolving certain real property disputes;
10 and generally relating to the ~~Blockchain–Based Real Property Title Pilot Program~~
11 study to evaluate blockchain–based real property title recordation and verification.

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

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

15 (2) "Blockchain" means a distributed ledger technology that provides a
16 secure, immutable, and transparent method of recording and storing data.

17 ~~(3) "Digital title" means a cryptographically secured token or smart~~
18 ~~contract that represents ownership of real property in the State.~~

1   ~~(4)   "Pilot jurisdictions" means not more than three counties in the State~~
2   ~~selected by the State Department of Assessments and Taxation to implement the Pilot~~
3   ~~Program.~~

4   ~~(5)   "Pilot Program" means the Blockchain–Based Real Property Title Pilot~~
5   ~~Program.~~

6   ~~(6)~~ (3) "Squatting" means the unauthorized occupation of real property by an
7   individual who does not have legal title, a lease, or the right of possession.

8   (b)   ~~(1)   There is a Blockchain–Based Real Property Title Pilot Program in the~~
9   The State Department of Assessments and Taxation, in coordination with the Maryland
10 Judiciary, the Maryland State Police, local law enforcement agencies, the Office of the
11 Attorney General, and third–party technology vendors, shall conduct a study to evaluate
12 the use of blockchain–based real property title recordation and verification.

13   ~~(2)~~ (c) The ~~purpose of the Pilot Program is to~~ study shall:

14   ~~(i)~~ (1) ~~explore~~ evaluate the use of blockchain technology for securely
15 recording and verifying real property ownership; and

16   ~~(ii)~~ (2) assess the potential for the use of blockchain technology to assist
17 law enforcement and courts in resolving real property disputes involving squatting.

18   ~~(c)   (1)   The State Department of Assessments and Taxation shall administer~~
19 ~~the Pilot Program.~~

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

21   ~~(d)   The State Department of Assessments and Taxation shall coordinate with the~~
22 ~~Maryland Judiciary, the Maryland State Police, local law enforcement agencies, and the~~
23 ~~Office of the Attorney General to:~~

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

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

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

29   ~~(4)   test smart contract capabilities for title transfers and escrow functions;~~
30 ~~and~~

31   ~~(5)   educate consumers, law enforcement, and courts on how to use the~~
32 ~~blockchain registry.~~

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

4   ~~(2)~~   ~~If the State Department of Assessments and Taxation contracts with a~~
5 ~~technology vendor under paragraph (1) of this subsection, the Department shall use a~~
6 ~~competitive procurement process in accordance with Division II of the State Finance and~~
7 ~~Procurement Article.~~

8   ~~(3)~~   ~~A technology vendor under this subsection shall:~~

9   ~~(i)~~   ~~comply with cybersecurity standards; and~~

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

12   ~~(f)~~ (d) On or before December 31, ~~2028~~ 2026, the State Department of Assessments
13 and Taxation, in coordination with the Maryland Judiciary, the Maryland State Police,
14 local law enforcement agencies, ~~and~~ the Office of the Attorney General, and third–party
15 technology vendors, shall report the results of the ~~Pilot Program and recommendations for~~
16 ~~statewide adoption~~ study 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
19 ~~October~~ June 1, 2026. ~~It shall remain effective for a period of 2 years and 9 months and, at~~
20 ~~the end of June 30, 2029, this Act, with no further action required by the General Assembly,~~
21 ~~shall be abrogated and of no further force and effect.~~

Approved:

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                                              Governor.

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                                     President of the Senate.

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                            Speaker of the House of Delegates.