

— DESTINATION —
Southern Maryland

February 21, 2021

Testimony to:
House Appropriations Committee
Delegate Maggie McIntosh, Chair
Delegate Mark S. Chang, Vice-Chair

Name: Lucille Ward Walker, Executive Director
Organization: Southern Maryland Heritage Area (Destination Southern Maryland)
Issue: **HB1099 – Historic African American Cemeteries Preservation Fund and Study**
Position: SUPPORT

The Southern Maryland Heritage Area (Destination Southern Maryland) is in full support of establishing the Historic African American Cemeteries Preservation Fund to identify, preserve, restore, protect, maintain, and commemorate graves, monuments, and markers at historic African American cemeteries. This bill will address an historic need of identifying the resting place of individuals who may have been, or will be, lost to time. So many of our African American gravesites have not received the attention or funding that they deserve, and they remain a fragile resource that needs protecting.

As we in Maryland approach the 400th commemoration of the founding of this state, it is critical that we have as much understanding of the stories and individuals who have contributed, toiled, lived and died within this state. Historical preservation of these sites will allow all of us to further understand our history and to honor those who have come before and all that they represent. This is particularly important now, as we grapple with generations of discrimination and lack of access.

We are pleased to offer our full support to HB1099 – Historic African American Cemeteries Preservation Fund and Study.

Sincerely,

Lucille W. Walker

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Executive Director

Destination Southern Maryland

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