

House Bill 1099- Historic African American Cemeteries

On behalf of myself Elinor Thompson, Genealogist, local historian and author who preserves, documents and archives historical church records and cemeteries in Anne Arundel County. I support this Bill. On behalf of The Broadneck African-American Heritage Project, Inc. As the Founder and President I support the all efforts of making this important Bill to become a reality. I also serve as a Commissioner on The Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture. I reside in Southern Anne Arundel County, Maryland.

Many of the black historical churches in Anne Arundel have not been properly documented or researched. The churches and the churchyards may have been closed. The cemeteries are normally situated in the rear of the cemeteries. In some cases as the Tanyard Cemetery, located in Deale, Maryland is on a separate piece of property from the historic Franklin Church incorporated in 1865. The church appeared in the United Methodist Church Conference records as early as 1832. The earliest erected tombstone located at this endangered cemetery is documented on a tombstone is 1842. This cemetery holds the remains of many blacks. It also holds the remains of a Revolutionary War Soldier and men from all foreign wars. Many generations of the occupant's family have passed on. Other cemeteries that include occupants and burials of notable people include slaves who were former pastors of churches owned by Martha Washington, wife of President George Washington. The Tanyard Cemetery needs to be recognized as one of the most vulnerable and endangered cemeteries in Anne Arundel County. Vandalism plagued the cemetery as well. I'm in support of Bill 1099. **Favorably with NO Amendments.**

I wish to testify both written and orally.

Elinor Thompson

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Photographs of Tanyard Cemetery
Deale- Beach Rd, Anne Arundel County

