



DIVISION OF OCCUPATIONAL AND PROFESSIONAL LICENSING  
Office of the Commissioner  
1100 N. Eutaw Street  
Baltimore, MD 21201

Date: February 16, 2024

Committee: Finance

Bill Title: SB 647 - Office of Cemetery Oversight- Abandoned Cemetery Fund-Establishment  
and Income Tax Checkoff

Re: Testimony

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SB 647, entitled Office of Cemetery Oversight- Abandoned Cemetery Fund, will create a fund to restore and maintain cemeteries that, for any number of reasons, have fallen into disrepair. The Department of Labor will oversee the fund and the upkeep for cemeteries that have deteriorated due to abandonment and neglect.

Taxpayers will be able to make donations to the fund through their State Income Taxes through a prompt asking for a minimum of a \$1 donation. These donations would be placed in the "Abandoned Cemetery Fund." These donations will then be used to administer the fund and pay for the maintenance of the abandoned cemeteries.

This bill will continue to enhance the partnership between the OCO and the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services (DPSCS) by utilizing teams of incarcerated persons to perform horticulture and restoration activities, providing skills and training for employment for inmates, as well as allowing the OCO to create new partnerships with small business and other deathcare organizations around our state.

By passing SB 647- Office of Cemetery Oversight- Abandoned Cemetery Fund, residents of Maryland (past & current) will be reassured that abandoned cemeteries will be cared for and the individuals buried there will finally be treated with respect.

Thank you for your time, and we ask this committee for a favorable report.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John C. Dove, Jr.", written in a cursive style.

John C. Dove, Jr.  
Commissioner  
Division of Occupational and Professional Licensing