



THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Sponsor Testimony

**SB 586: Corporations and Associations - Methodist Church Trust Requirement
Repeal and Disaffiliation Requirements**

Good afternoon, Chair Wilson, Vice Chair Crosby and members of the *House Economic Matters Committee*. SB 586 seeks to repeal the requirement that all assets owned by any United Methodist Church be held in trust for the United Methodist Church's General Conference. Currently, under existing law, these assets are subject to the church's discipline, practices, and ministerial appointments as determined by the General Conference of the United Methodist Church.

As ***amended***, SB 586 allows a local United Methodist Church to disaffiliate from the United Methodist Conference and retain ownership of its property, subject to the provisions outlined in the amendment. If the UMC Conference has made financial investments in the real property used by the local congregation, the departing church must reimburse the Conference for the total amount of such investments. However, any payments made by the local church toward the acquisition, maintenance, or renovation of the property will be credited against the balance owed. The UMC Conference must provide a full and transparent accounting of all funds it has contributed to the acquisition or improvement of the real property before determining the final reimbursement amount.

Therefore, I respectfully urge a FAVORABLE committee report for SB 586.