
MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF LABOR LETTER OF INFORMATION ON SB631.

TO: Senate Finance Committee
FROM: Deborah Rappazzo, Executive Director, Office of Cemetery Oversight
DATE: February 20, 2025
BILL: SB 631-Commission on Abandoned and Neglected Maryland
Cemeteries - Establishment

Senate Bill 631 establishes a new Commission on Abandoned and Neglected Maryland Cemeteries within the Office of Cemetery Oversight (“OCO”). The Commission will consist of 15 members, each with specialties surrounding deathcare, preservation planning, industry development, knowledge of cemetery history, architecture, archaeology, and a consumer. All members of the Commission will be appointed by the Director of OCO. The Commission will be charged with establishing standard definitions for neglected and abandoned cemeteries, support the development of a statewide inventory of cemeteries and burial sites in Maryland, as well as develop recommendations relating to historical cemeteries. Furthermore, this new Commission will be required to submit an annual report to the Governor and the General Assembly by December 1st each year.

The OCO is a small, self-funded unit. When fully staffed, the OCO consists of a total of three full-time employees and one part-time employee. Currently, the OCO is advised by a 12-member advisory council with decades of deathcare experience. Due to OCO’s limited staffing, the OCO will have to increase staff to handle the new duties created by Senate Bill 631. Furthermore, since the OCO is a self-funded unit, it will be challenging for the OCO to absorb the additional staffing and legal expenses that will be necessary to fulfill the goals of this new Commission.

For questions, please contact Andrew Fulginiti, at **Andrew.Fulginiti@maryland.gov**

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