

## Testimony in Support of HB0893 / SB0234

### Business Regulation – Abandoned Cemeteries – Acquisition and Disposition

Delegate Hill

Good afternoon Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Katie Myers, and I serve as Vice President of the Coalition to Protect Maryland Burial Sites. I am here in strong support of HB0893 and its cross-file, SB0234.

These bills would authorize a governmental unit to acquire property where an abandoned cemetery is located, require the governmental unit to make a good-faith effort to contact certain interested parties, and authorize a person or organization to petition a court to transfer such property when appropriate.

Across Maryland, abandoned cemeteries are often left in legal limbo due to dissolved corporations, unclear ownership, or the absence of responsible caretakers. Without a defined statutory process, these burial grounds fall into neglect and deterioration. This legislation creates a clear, responsible pathway to ensure these sacred spaces are preserved rather than forgotten.

As a native of Hoopers Island, I understand how deeply communities value historic cemeteries such as Anchor Hope Cemetery and Hoopers Island Graveyard. When ownership becomes unclear, families and local advocates are often left without legal options to protect the graves of their ancestors. These bills provide that pathway.

HB0893 and SB0234 bring clarity, accountability, and preservation to burial grounds that might otherwise be lost.

I respectfully urge a favorable report.

Thank you for your time and consideration.