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Howard County*

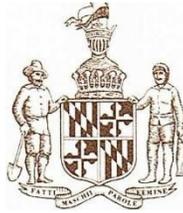
Health and Government Operations Committee

*Subcommittees*

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Maternal, Infant, and Child Health



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## **THE MARYLAND GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

### **HB893 Business Regulation - Cemeteries - Abandoned Cemeteries - Acquisition and Disposition**

February 25, 2026

Chair and Members of the Committee,

**House Bill 893** authorizes a governmental unit to acquire, by condemnation, property on which an abandoned cemetery is located with the intent to transfer that property to descendants of those interred, a descendant community organization, or a nonprofit organization.

The bill defines “abandoned cemetery” to include circumstances where the cemetery’s operating organization has ceased to exist without conveying title, where no property owner is listed in State records, where the property has been condemned, or where legal ownership cannot be determined.

If a governmental unit proceeds by condemnation, it must do so in accordance with Maryland Rule 12–204. After acquiring the property, the governmental unit is required to make timely and reasonable efforts to contact descendants of the deceased people interred in the cemetery to identify appropriate parties for transfer. A descendant, descendant community organization, or nonprofit organization may also bring an action requesting the court to transfer the property.

The bill further requires that any descendant, descendant community organization, or nonprofit organization that acquires the property must maintain and preserve the abandoned cemetery.

If the governmental unit retains the property, it must maintain and preserve the cemetery until transfer occurs, and if transfer cannot be accomplished within a reasonable period, the governmental unit may facilitate the reinterment of any human remains or pet remains to an appropriate operational cemetery.

The fiscal and policy note authorizes condemnation proceedings for abandoned cemeteries with the intent to transfer them to descendants, descendant community organizations, or nonprofit organizations, and requires maintenance and preservation following acquisition.

**HB893** establishes a statutory process for the acquisition, transfer, maintenance, and, when necessary, reinterment associated with abandoned cemeteries.

I urge a favorable report.

*Terri L. Hill, M.D.*