



April 2, 2026

HB 1005 – Business Regulation - Cemeteries - Requirements for Sale or Transfer or Government Acquisition

Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

Position: Favorable w/ Amendment

The Maryland Catholic Conference (MCC) offers testimony in support of House Bill 1005 with amendments. The Catholic Conference is the public policy representative of the three (arch)dioceses serving Maryland, which together encompass over one million Marylanders. Statewide, their parishes, schools, hospitals and numerous charities combine to form our state's second largest social service provider network, behind only our state government.

We appreciate the bill's intent to create a distinct reporting process for cases in which the individual believed to have been abused or neglected as a child is now an adult. This approach appropriately recognizes that Child Protective Services must prioritize the protection of children currently at risk, while also ensuring that adult survivors have a meaningful avenue to report past abuse and express their preferences regarding investigation.

Reason for Amendments: Protecting Confidentiality and Avoiding Unintended Burdens on Reporters

We respectfully request two clarifying amendments to subsection (d)(3)(i). As drafted, the bill requires the reporting form to:

*“include a document **to be given to the individual who is the subject of the report** regarding how the information in the report may be used.”*

Without clarification, this language could be interpreted to mean that the *reporter*—a mandated reporter acting in a professional capacity—must personally provide this document to the adult survivor. That interpretation would be inconsistent with the longstanding confidentiality protections surrounding abuse and neglect reporting. It could:

- Compromise the privacy of both the reporter and the survivor;
- Create confusion or strain in professional or pastoral relationships;
- Discourage reporting out of fear of noncompliance; and

- Be practically impossible in many cases, as the reporter may not have contact information for the adult survivor or may not be in a position to reach out.

The intent of the bill is sound, but the language should clearly indicate that **the Department**, not the reporter, is responsible for providing this informational document to the individual who is the subject of the report.

Requested Amendments

To ensure clarity and preserve confidentiality, we request the following amendments:

AMENDMENT NO. 1

On page 3, line 17, strike the first instance of “TO” and replace with “THAT MAY”.

AMENDMENT NO. 2

On page 3, line 18, after “REPORT” add “, WHEN PRACTICABLE AND APPROPRIATE,”.

These changes clarify that the Department may provide the informational document to the adult survivor when appropriate—not that the reporter must do so.

Conclusion

For these reasons, the Maryland Catholic Conference respectfully urges a **favorable report with the proposed amendments** on HB 1005. These clarifications will strengthen the bill, protect confidentiality, and ensure that the reporting process functions as intended for both survivors and mandated reporters.

For these reasons, I respectfully request a favorable report with amendment on HB 1005. Thank you for your time and consideration.